

LITERARY FRAGMENTS

GEORGE C. BRODRICK



FROM THE AUTHOR.

*See Prefatory Note.*



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# LITERARY FRAGMENTS



BY THE

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WARDEN OF MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD

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## PREFATORY NOTE

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THE present volume mainly consists of articles contributed to periodicals, and other papers separately printed, since the publication of my 'Political Studies,' in 1879. It contains, however, four articles on educational subjects of an earlier date, and three Lectures on 'The Place of Oxford University in English History,' delivered at the Royal Institution on April 15, 22, and 29, 1890, but hitherto unpublished. I have added a very few published letters; three Election Addresses issued in 1868, 1874, and 1880, respectively; and a little selection of Speeches, imperfectly reported, yet retaining sufficient trace of preparation to claim a place among 'Literary Fragments.'

These scattered materials have been roughly grouped under the following heads:

- I. Education (1866-79).
- II. English and Irish Land Systems (1881-2).
- III. Economical Politics (1884-6).
- IV. Irish Policy (1886-8).
- V. Historical Subjects (1856-90).
- VI. Election Addresses (1868-80).
- VII. Speeches and Letters, Political and Occasional (1868-90).

In some of my Essays and Speeches, especially those on the Irish Question, I have freely borrowed arguments, and even passages, from other compositions of my own. Several

instances of such repetition will be found in the present volume; for I have not thought it well to sacrifice literary unity or symmetry by striking out these innocent plagiarisms. Nor have I revised any of the articles here collected, with a view to remedy defects of thought or style, preferring that each should be left, in its original form, to the judgment of friendly eyes. I could have wished to include among them a few specimens of my anonymous contributions to the daily press, between 1860 and 1873, which I have always regarded as the chief political and literary work of my life. But the honourable traditions of journalism, now too seldom observed, preclude me from identifying any 'leading-articles' as my own; and three-fourths of my productions will thus remain buried, with so many others of higher merit, in the catacombs reserved for old newspaper-files.

These Literary Fragments are printed, not with the vain hope of rescuing them from the oblivion to which they are destined, but in the belief that a rapidly-narrowing circle of relations and friends may kindly accept them, as a simple memento of their author. They are not published, because I have no wish to challenge public criticism, and because no miscellaneous assortment of 'Remains' can win public favour, unless recommended by the intrinsic value of its contents, by the arts of skilful advertisement, or by the attraction of a popular name.

GEORGE C. BRODRICK.

*April, 1891.*



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I  
EDUCATION



## UNIVERSITY TESTS<sup>1</sup>

THE subject of University Tests is essentially and intimately connected with the still larger subject of University Extension—a subject which is gradually assuming the proportions of a national question. Upon this ground alone it would merit the special attention of this Association, but it is not upon this ground alone that I have ventured to introduce it. For several years past, the anomalous nature of the subscriptions required at our two older Universities upon admission to their higher degrees or to their governing bodies, to many Academical offices, and to College Fellowships, has been recognised by the public and by the Legislature. Bills designed to remedy one or other of these anomalies were submitted to the House of Commons, with more or less success, in the two last Sessions. There is reason to believe that Bills will be again brought forward with the same object during the Session of this year. The discussion of to-night, therefore, possesses an interest more than speculative, and may possibly have a practical influence on future legislation.

Here follows a full description of the University and College Tests then in force at Oxford and Cambridge respectively, all of which have since been abolished.

Such, then, is the measure of the Academical privileges and College emoluments conceded to Dissenters at Oxford and Cambridge respectively. At the former, the University Statutes, unrepealed by the Act of 1854, preclude their

<sup>1</sup> A paper read to a meeting of the Social Science Association on January 26, 1866.

obtaining an M.A. degree or taking any part in the government of the University; at the latter, they may, indeed, take the M.A. degree, but they cannot, without making a declaration of *bonâ fide* Church Membership, belong to the governing body. At both, they are disqualified for becoming candidates for College Fellowships, unless willing to make the declaration of conformity, after which (at Oxford, at least) they must, in most instances, proceed to the M.A. degree, and then sign the Thirty-nine Articles on pain of forfeiting their Fellowship.

To remove these two kinds of disability, two measures have been proposed, the one applying to Oxford only, the other to both Universities. By the Oxford Tests Bill, introduced by Mr. Dodson in 1864, and again by Mr. Goschen in 1865, it was proposed to throw open the M.A. degree, with the vote in Convocation attached to it, to all persons, irrespective of their religious faith. Inasmuch, however, as such an enactment, unless qualified, would have incidentally thrown open all offices, both Academical and extra-Academical, for which that degree may be the only theological qualification—a proviso was appended to it, obliging those who should be appointed to such offices to sign, not the Articles, but a declaration of *bonâ fide* Church Membership. The policy of this proviso was much questioned at the time, on the ground that it involved the enactment of a new, though, as many thought, a less burdensome test, and gratuitously limited the operation of a great principle. It was retained, however, and the Bill having been lost by two votes only in 1864, was carried by a considerable majority on the second reading in 1865. It was afterwards withdrawn by the mover, on finding that it could not pass into law before the dissolution of Parliament. The other Bill, simply repealing so much of the Act of Uniformity as relates to College Fellowships and Tutorships, was introduced in 1864 by Mr. Bouverie, and has met with a similar fate. Both originated in petitions signed by some of the most eminent members of the two Universities, resident as well as non-resident, and received the hearty support of the Nonconformist body.

The limits of this paper do not permit me to discuss that which is, to many, the most interesting aspect of the Tests question. Whether it be consistent with the progress of theological science, that dogmatic formularies, drawn up at the Reformation in terms which bear the stamp of a compromise, should be imposed upon any Churchman in our own generation; whether, even if imposed on the clergy, they need also be imposed on the laity; whether it can be right or reasonable to make freedom of inquiry equally impossible for ordained clergymen and for persons who contemplate taking orders; whether the effect of subscription upon young men entering or leaving the University be to secure the purity of their faith, or to weaken their sense of moral obligation; whether, in short, these tests be at once futile in restraining thought, and mischievous in blunting conscience, within our own Church—I shall here forbear to consider. It is with their operation in excluding from the University those who are outside the Church that I have now to deal.

From this point of view, the principle of the Oxford Tests Bill—in other words, the principle of a free University—seems to rest on deep and firm grounds of justice and expediency. Historically, our Universities are national, and not Anglican, institutions; legally, they are lay, and not spiritual, corporations. These propositions are not only laid down in our text-books of law, they are not only confirmed by the fact that both Universities were founded long before the Church of England had any existence, and that at both the lay members have long outnumbered the clerical members, but they constitute the only valid justification for the unique privileges of these two educational bodies. The very idea of an University, in the present day, supersedes and excludes that of a clerical Seminary, and even that of an Academy open to students of all religious communions, but reserving its highest degrees, its tutorships, and its professorships for one communion only. Such an idea may, indeed, have been natural in that age when the University, like the State itself, recognised the moral supremacy of the Church, when the

Church was Catholic in reality as well as in name, when the clergy enjoyed a monopoly of learning, and when secular knowledge was the handmaid of theology. It might be plausibly entertained in the age of Leicester or the age of Laud, when statesmen as well as ecclesiastics still indulged in the hope of making the Church of England coextensive with the English people. Those ages have passed away, never to return, and with them the only presumptive reasons in favour of such a connection between the Church and the University as would justify the refusal of lay-degrees to Dissenters. That refusal has already been condemned by the Legislature, so far as regards the bachelor's degree in the four lay-faculties, and at Cambridge even the M.A. degree has been thrown open, though without the rights belonging to it. In short, the *presumption* is now entirely in favour of educational liberty at the Universities, and it remains to examine the arguments, of very unequal weight, that have been urged to rebut this presumption.

It is said, in the first place, that although our Universities are national institutions, they are national only in the same sense in which the Church is national, and not in that of being properly accessible to all, without distinction of creed. This objection refutes itself, the truth being that our Church, though not such as Laud would have had it, is far more comprehensive and less exacting than our Universities. Granting that a State Church is for the public good, and that our own is the most potent engine of enlightenment in this country, it does, in theory, embrace all without exception, and it does, in fact, tender all its ministrations and ordinances to the laity without requiring any test of orthodoxy whatever. So long as there is a national Church, a national University ought, at least, to be coextensive with it, welcoming every subject of the realm who is willing to come, and admitting him, as of right, to its privileges. This is exactly what the University of Oxford, thanks to the profligate nobleman who, as Chancellor, introduced subscription to the Articles, has hitherto failed to do. 'It certainly is singular,' as the Oxford



Commissioners remark, 'that a lay corporation should require from laymen, simply as a condition of membership, that which the Church of England does not require for participation in its most sacred ordinance.' It is surely more singular still that, after the clergy themselves have been relieved of subscription to the three Articles of the Thirty-sixth Canon, and the ratification thereof, containing the preposterous assertion that Queen Elizabeth was Queen of France, a lay member of Oxford should still be compelled to sign them on taking his M.A. degree.

But other and more practical objections are entertained by many who freely acknowledge the educational claims of Dissenters, and the absolute right of Parliament to deal with the constitution and endowments of Oxford and Cambridge, as it did, in effect, at the Reformation. They allege that, whether these two Universities be the property of the Church or the property of the nation, it is for the public interest to maintain in its integrity their peculiar connection with the national Church. This connection they consider to be the sole guarantee for definite religious teaching, and the one safeguard against a purely secular system of education. Hence, while they are prepared to admit Dissenters as students, they shrink from giving them any share of governing power, if not from allowing them to obtain those higher degrees which are the symbol of complete academical citizenship. They would, therefore, prefer the endowment, however costly, of new Dissenting Universities, to the admission of Dissenters on equal terms at Oxford and Cambridge. Some who thus think deny the existence of any considerable demand for University education, as it is there understood, among the leading bodies of Dissenters. Others apprehend an overwhelming influx of persons hostile to the Church. Both, however, agree that, if Dissenters should once gain a footing in the Oxford Convocation or the Cambridge Senate—still more, if they should become fellows or tutors of colleges—the cause of 'religion and learning' would be seriously prejudiced. Rather than risk such a consequence they would

retain subscriptions which they know and admit to press heavily on the consciences of some good Churchmen, and lightly enough on the consciences of some who have ceased to believe in Christianity.

This class of objections owes its force, in a great degree, to a confusion between the idea of a free University and the idea of free Colleges. Now, the University might be perfectly free to members of all denominations, or of no denomination, and yet might contain within itself any number of denominational Colleges. Were all University tests abolished, except for theological degrees, and the privilege of opening private halls or founding Colleges granted to Churchmen and Dissenters alike, it is not only possible, but highly probable, that each religious body would have an establishment of its own. Those Wesleyan or Baptist parents who might object to their children being educated by tutors, and mixing with companions, of a different communion, would naturally prefer a Wesleyan or Baptist Hall to a College imbued with Anglican traditions, or to a lodging-house under no spiritual or moral superintendence. The prevalence of the latter system, however, at Edinburgh and Glasgow—not to speak of the London or the Continental Universities—proves at least that, in the opinion of a highly scrupulous people, it is not so perilous to the morality of students as its English opponents represent. But this is not the present question. The question is whether any just rights of the Church of England, or the interests of religion, are endangered by offering the full benefit of education at Oxford and Cambridge, without any vexatious or humiliating reserve, to all who may choose to avail themselves of it. The answer is self-evident. The Church has no more right, as we have seen, to a monopoly of the Universities than she has to a monopoly of Parliament. Her great superiority in wealth and learning will secure to her, so long as it lasts, a legitimate ascendancy in both, and her best friends will ask no more. No one acquainted with Oxford or Cambridge society can seriously believe that young men frequenting the same professors' lectures, but not even residing in the

same College, would devote themselves to proselytising each other. Such a danger, however, were it real, must inevitably redound to the advantage of the Church, which for many years to come must be far more than a match for Dissent in an arena long occupied by herself, and possesses an exclusive command of the faculty of theology and the University pulpit. But the danger is wholly unreal, and there is really something absurd in an University which puts the works of Grote and Mill into the hands of young Churchmen trembling at the prospect of their coming into contact with the followers of Wesley or Robert Hall. It is far more likely that an infusion of Dissenting undergraduates would tend to subordinate theological disputes to the great work of education. It is precisely because Oxford is so thoroughly clerical that questions which belong specially to the province of divines have there become topics of general discussion, propagating the *odium theologium* among future lawyers, scholars, and men of science, and clouding with the darkness of scepticism the minds of youths still fresh from school. Most true it is, as Mr. Goschen pointed out in his masterly speech on the Oxford Tests Bill, that free inquiry and the pursuit of truth are no less the functions of an University than mere instruction. That inquiry, however, should at least be spontaneous. It is most profitably carried on by mature intellects, and especially by those who, filling professorial chairs, are entrusted with the duty of guiding the progress of thought in the various branches of knowledge which they represent. It is the same predominance of the clerical element, acting at once in two opposite directions, which dwarfs the learning of our professors, and stimulates into morbid activity the speculative tendencies of our students.

The admission of Dissenters to existing Colleges involves, it must be confessed, greater difficulties; and these difficulties are not ignored by those who, nevertheless, desire to remove restrictions imposed by the Act of Uniformity upon the tenure of College Fellowships. The fear of secularising University education is almost unmeaning, for, with the exception of a

few simple questions on Scripture and the Articles, an Oxford education, as represented by the University examinations, is already purely secular. Colleges, on the other hand, do profess, by means of divinity-lectures, chapel-services, and the personal intercourse of tutors with pupils, to give a religious character to education. It would be possible to exaggerate the effect of such influences, but it would also be possible to depreciate it unduly, and it may well be conceded that if the Nonconformists could not be admitted to collegiate emoluments without banishing religion from the College system, it would be a very strong argument against admitting them. Happily, no such dilemma is presented to us. The principle of Mr. Bouverie's Bill is, as it ought to be, permissive. It would not compel the governing body of a College to elect a Dissenter as Fellow, but would only enable them to do so, if they thought it for the interest of the foundation as a place of religion and learning. To suppose that a Dissenter, being elected, would endeavour to substitute the form of worship to which he had been accustomed for that of the Church of England, or to propagate heterodox views among the undergraduates, is to suppose that which is contrary to all experience. It is, indeed, notorious that differences of religious opinion prevail within the pale of the Church, compared to which those which divide Churchmen from the great majority of Dissenters are as nothing. Scotch Presbyterians have already found their way into Oxford common-rooms, without disturbing their harmony or plotting treason against the doctrine and ritual of the Church. The truth is, that a high and liberal education, such as can alone enable a man to compete with success for an open Fellowship, is all but a sovereign antidote against sectarian prejudices. There is not a more enlightened and conscientious body of men than the younger tutors of Colleges at both Universities, nor would they be less enlightened and conscientious if they represented the *élite* of English graduates instead of representing only the *élite* of Anglican graduates. Such men know the difference between dogmatic theology and practical religion. They can

and do agree to differ upon many points of opinion, but they do not hold the creed of secularism, and may well be trusted to make such arrangements for religious teaching and public worship as would be satisfactory to the parents of their pupils. Not that religious influences can only be exercised by tutors. At this very moment the most powerful religious influences at Oxford are neither University influences, nor yet College influences; they are the influences of earnest men, belonging to various schools of theology, and owing their authority entirely to their own personal qualities.

Hitherto we have proceeded on the assumption that a real and considerable demand for University education, as it is understood at Oxford and Cambridge, does exist among the Nonconformists of England. But is this assumption true? Is it not the fact that social as well as theological barriers divide the great mass of Dissenters from Churchmen? Would not the unprofessional character of Oxford studies, and the age to which they are prolonged, as well as the strict conditions of residence, deter many, even of the wealthier Dissenters, from sending their sons thither? Does not the formidable rivalry of 'business' deprive more young men, especially in Lancashire, of an University education, than any impatience of religious tests? Does not the expense, or supposed expense, of such an education, keep away still more, whose parents might otherwise get over their religious scruples? Have not the more superficial of these scruples reference to the Anglican *tone* of Oxford and Cambridge rather than to any practical disabilities of Dissenters, and is not the aversion to this tone nearly connected with an aversion to the aristocratic prestige and mediæval associations of those ancient seats of learning? Have not the deeper of them reference, not to the dominant Anglicanism of either University, but to the sceptical spirit which is known to be abroad in them, and especially in Oxford? Do not many of the most religious and respectable Dissenters look upon Oxford with horror, not only as a nursery of vice and extravagance, but as a hotbed of infidelity? Do not some even of

the more liberal Dissenters, and most of the Roman Catholics, dread the idea of unsectarian education, as if it involved that of exclusively secular, or still worse of irreligious education? Do not persons of this class, like the hierarchy of Rome, esteem independence of thought a more deadly enemy than dogmatic heresy, and tremble to send forth their children, as lambs among wolves, into the wilderness of Oxford philosophy?

Let all these questions be answered in the affirmative, yet the duty and policy of abandoning the tests in question remain the same as before. Oxford and Cambridge are no longer what they were, however unlike what they might and will be. Side by side with the movement for the abolition of tests is a movement of which the object is to make the Universities national in every sense of the term. Much has already been done at Oxford, and much more is likely to be done, in this direction. As Oxford education becomes, as it does every day, less scholastic and more truly liberal, it must be and is more and more highly prized by those commercial classes to whom England was but lately a country without Universities. There are no classes who more specially need, did they but know it, that moral and intellectual discipline which Oxford can supply, for it is these which command the great centres of population, and are themselves the great employers of industry. There may be other obstacles and prejudices which repel them, but the existence of tests is assuredly a chief stumbling-block. Tests are to them a badge of Anglian ascendancy, an indication that Oxford postpones the interests of education to the interests of the Church—the Church of the aristocracy and the idle classes. Break down this barrier of suspicion by an unreserved invitation to share the benefits of the University—remove the source of this mistrust and prejudice by a signal public act of conciliation—enable the Universities to come forward and undertake the guidance of national education—and the Dissenters of the money-making classes will, for the first time, have the choice fairly presented to them between an early apprenticeship to

commercial pursuits and that higher culture which Oxford professes to give. Their present indifference to this culture is not wholly unreasonable. Looking at Oxford from outside, they see that she is not, in the same sense or degree with the German Universities, the centre of intellectual life to the mind of the nation. The great luminaries of modern science, the great inventors and engineers whose names are known throughout the civilised world, the most original philosophers, are not, for the most part, University men. With some brilliant exceptions, our University professors do not enjoy an European, or even a national, reputation, nor are there many persons at either University devoting their lives to the prosecution of any one study. The wealthier and more intelligent Dissenters perceive all this, and observe too, that, at Oxford, the sincere friends of education are constantly outvoted, even on educational questions, by a majority who do not conceal their hostility to whatever favours intellectual progress. Failing to see the amount and quality of the educational work done, in spite of all this, and not appreciating the subtler influences brought to bear in such a society on the least worthy of its members, they draw the erroneous, but not groundless, inference that Oxford is not in earnest about education, but is thoroughly in earnest about the interests of theological parties within the State Church.

If this be so, and if our two ancient Universities be worth maintaining as national institutions, it is surely an object of statesmanship to encourage the popular demand for University education, and to place University education under the searching eye of public opinion. By this single measure both these objects will be promoted, to the benefit, as I have striven to show, of the nation at large and of the Church herself. It is not, indeed, probable, nor is it desirable, that hereditary antipathies and conscientious objections on the part of Dissenting parents should be overcome at once. It is far better that a change involving so much should be wrought out by an extremely gradual process, and that our own generation should not anticipate the problems reserved for

its successor. For years to come, were the Universities and the Colleges ever so free to them, Dissenters must form a very small minority in either. Should they hereafter become more numerous and influential than we can at present venture to anticipate, it will be a proof—not that they ought never to have been admitted, but rather that a larger class than we now suppose has been hitherto excluded by Tests from all that is implied in University education; an education, with all its faults, the highest in this country, and capable of a development to which no limit can be assigned.

For our Universities, let us remember, have a mission of their own, and it is a mission as sacred and as responsible as any that can be confided by society to an independent body. To form directly the mental habits of the governing class, to regulate indirectly the educational standard throughout England, to preside with authority over the advancement of learning, to assign their relative value to different sciences, exalting some to honour and consigning others to neglect, to correct by a sound philosophy the intellectual vices of an utilitarian age, to bear an undying witness to the supreme value of truth—these are amongst the higher functions which legitimately belong to our Universities, yet cannot be perfectly discharged, till the last vestige of ecclesiastical monopoly has disappeared from their constitution.



## THE UNIVERSITIES AND THE NATION

CONTEMPORARY REVIEW, *June 1875*

THE Report of the late Universities Commission, though published last autumn, has attracted less attention than it deserves, and the vague assurances given by the Prime Minister, at the opening of the Session, have not as yet been redeemed by any Parliamentary action. No such action, indeed, could be desired in the interest of the Universities or the Nation, unless preceded by a free discussion on the question of Academical Endowments. Yet no such discussion can be conducted intelligently or profitably without an adequate consideration of facts equally beyond the scope of the Commissioners' inquiry and the cognisance of the general public. So limited is the range of political memory in these days, that of the few who have scrutinised the gross totals of University and College revenues, now ascertained for the first time, not one in ten has studied, or would care to study, the far more comprehensive Reports of the Commissions issued by Lord J. Russell's Government in 1850. Nevertheless, some knowledge of the results then obtained, and of the changes since effected at Oxford and Cambridge, is absolutely necessary in defining the course of future legislation. Before proceeding to regulate the distribution of Academical Endowments, the country ought to realise distinctly the extent to which the Universities at present discharge their responsibilities to learning and education, as well as the advances which they have made during the last twenty-five years. It is one thing to force reforms on reactionary, obstructive, and self-seeking corporations; it is another thing to aid the

spontaneous efforts of corporations on the whole liberal, public-spirited, and progressive. If it should appear that few, if any, public institutions in England can exhibit so good an account of their stewardship as the Universities and Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, it will assuredly be no reason for withholding any measures which may enable them to realise a still higher ideal of efficiency; but it will be an excellent reason for not dissipating, in the attempt to utilise, resources already so well employed.

In comparing the present with the past application of Academical Endowments, it will be convenient to fix our attention specially on one University—that is, upon Oxford. So far as concerns the main features of their internal economy, what is true of Oxford is, for the most part, true of Cambridge, and little would be gained by dwelling on minute differences of system, which have no bearing on the relation between the Universities and the Nation. There are, however, certain broad distinctions between Oxford and Cambridge, which it may be well for the non-academical reader to bear in mind. Both are essentially collegiate Universities, since the constitution of both alike secures valuable privileges to Colleges, since the vast majority of their students continue to be members of Colleges, and since the aggregate revenues of Colleges are in either case nearly tenfold greater than the revenues of the University itself. Still, the predominance of collegiate influence and the collegiate spirit has always been greater and more exclusive at Cambridge, owing to a variety of causes, the most obvious of which is the great superiority of Trinity and St. John's, both in numbers and in prestige, over the smaller Colleges. On the other hand, the disproportionate encouragement so long given to mathematical attainments at Cambridge, and the unique importance traditionally attached by its College authorities to the results of the final University examination, have not failed to affect the character of Cambridge as a place of national education. Mathematics are not cultivated at the great public schools with as much zeal or success as classical literature and other cognate studies,

which are more liberally rewarded at Oxford. The consequence is, that it is no rare occurrence at Cambridge for the first place in the Mathematical Tripos, carrying with it the certainty of a College Fellowship, to be won by a young man of humble birth from a cheap grammar school in the north of England, who never even held a scholarship or exhibition till he reached the University. At Oxford, on the contrary, though competition is equally free, and though almost every College throws open its Scholarships and Fellowships to members of other Colleges, fewer young men of this class practically succeed in obtaining the highest honours and prizes. Such diversities as these, it is true, are too slight to impair the marked family likeness which distinguishes Oxford and Cambridge from Scotch and Continental Universities, but they may help to explain some divergent tendencies, which might, otherwise, be somewhat perplexing.

When the Oxford University Commission of 1850 was appointed, the University and Colleges were governed respectively by antiquated codes of statutes, which it would have been no less disastrous than impossible to enforce, but which, in the opinion of eminent authorities, they had no power to alter. Their practical management, as it existed but five-and-twenty years ago, would hardly be credited by reformers of a younger generation. The sole initiative power in University legislation, and by far the largest share of University administration, was vested in the Hebdomadal Board, consisting solely of Heads of Colleges with the two Proctors, and well described by Mr. Goldwin Smith as 'an organised torpor.' There was an assembly of residents, known as the House of Congregation, but its business had dwindled to mere formalities, such as receiving propositions which it was not permitted to discuss, conferring degrees in the name of the University, and granting dispensations, as a matter of course. The University Convocation included, as now, all full (or 'Regent') Masters of Arts, and had the right of debating, but this right was virtually annulled by the necessity of speaking in Latin, and Convocation could only accept or reject without amend-

ment measures proposed by the Hebdomadal Board. At this period, no student could be a member of the University without belonging to a College, while every member of a College was compelled to sleep within its walls, until after his third year of residence, instead of being allowed, as at Cambridge, to live in lodgings. Persons unable to sign the Thirty-nine Articles were absolutely excluded, not merely from degrees, but from all access to the University, inasmuch as the test of subscription was enforced at matriculation. It is needless to add that, being unable to enter the University, they could not obtain College Fellowships, which, however, were further protected against the intrusion of Dissenters by the declaration of Churchmanship required to be made under the Act of Uniformity. If Professorial lectures were not at so low an ebb as in the days of Gibbon, when the greater part of the Professors had 'given up even the pretence of teaching,' they were lamentably scarce and ineffective. The educational function of the University had, in fact, been almost wholly merged in College tuition, but the Scholarships, as well as the Fellowships, of the Colleges were fettered by all manner of restrictions, which marred their value as incentives to industry. Some were confined to natives of particular counties, others were attached to particular schools, in some cases 'Founder's Kin' had a statutable preference, and, in too many, favouritism was checked by no rule of law or practice. The great majority of Fellows were bound to take Holy Orders, and the whole University was dominated by a clerical spirit which directly tended to make it, as it has so long been, a focus of theological controversy.

It is to be regretted that many of the wise and liberal alterations recommended by the Commission of 1850 were not at once adopted by the Legislature. No steps, for instance, were taken for abolishing the invidious privileges of Noblemen and Gentlemen Commoners, students were not relieved from the obligation of belonging to a College and residing within its walls, no University matriculation-examination was established, no order of sub-professors or lecturers

was instituted, the Long Vacation continued unreformed and the University examinations continued to be conducted in Term-time, clerical Fellowships were maintained, though on a reduced scale, and the practice of applying College funds to the purchase of advowsons for the clerical Fellows was not suppressed. On the other hand, no one who knows what Oxford was in 1850 can doubt that by the Oxford Reform Act of 1854, and the College Ordinances framed by the Executive Commission under its provisions, a profound and most beneficial change was wrought in the whole spirit and working of the University system. The Hebdomadal Board was replaced by a representative Council, and Congregation was remodelled into a vigorous deliberative assembly, with the right of speaking in English. The monopoly of Colleges was broken down, and an opening made for ulterior extension, by the revival of Private Halls. The Professoriate was considerably increased, reorganised, and re-endowed, by means of contributions from Colleges. The Colleges were emancipated from their mediæval statutes, were invested with new constitutions, and acquired new legislative powers. The Fellowships were almost universally thrown open to merit, and the effect of this revolution was not merely to create ample rewards for the highest academical attainments, but to place the governing power within Colleges in the hands of able men likely to promote further improvements. The number and value of Scholarships were largely augmented, and many, though not all, of the restrictions upon them were abolished. The great mass of vexatious and obsolete Oaths was swept away, and, though candidates for the M.A. degree and persons elected to Fellowships were still required to make the old subscriptions and declarations, it was enacted that no religious test should be imposed at matriculation, or on taking a Bachelor's degree. The University itself had anticipated the results of the Commission by liberal changes in its curriculum and examinations, of which the most important was the assignment of independent 'schools' to Law and Modern History and to Natural Science respectively, simultaneously

with the foundation of a new Museum. The permanence of these changes was, however, additionally secured by the clause introduced into the College Ordinances, whereby it was directed that Fellowships should be appropriated from time to time for the encouragement of all the studies recognised by the University.

Here followed a description of the educational progress made by the University of Oxford between 1850 and 1874, the institution of Local Examinations, the organisation of Academical Lectures in provincial towns, and the Examination of Public Schools by a Joint-Board representing Oxford and Cambridge.

In considering the services rendered by the Universities to the Nation since they recovered their liberty of action, it is impossible to pass over the abolition of University Tests. This great reform was notoriously brought about, not so much by the pressure of external opinion, either popular or Parliamentary, as by the persistent and disinterested agitation carried on by reformers, mostly Fellows of Colleges, within the Universities themselves. In the year 1862, a petition was presented from seventy-four resident Fellows of Colleges at Cambridge, praying for the repeal of the clause applicable to Fellowships in the Act of Uniformity. In the year 1863, a petition was presented from 106 Heads, Professors, Fellows and ex-Fellows, and College Tutors at Oxford, praying for the removal of theological restrictions on degrees. In the year 1868, a petition against all religious tests, except for degrees in theology, was signed by eighty Heads, Professors, Lecturers, and resident Fellows at Oxford, while a similar petition was signed by 123 non-resident Fellows and ex-Fellows. In the same year, a petition to the same effect was signed by 227 Heads and present or former Office-holders and Fellows of Cambridge. Separate petitions, specially directed against the declaration of Conformity, were signed by thirty-two out of sixty Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge, and by the Master and all the Fellows, except one, of Christ's College, Cambridge. Assuredly these efforts were ably supported by the Liberal party in Parliament, and by the Nonconformist

body in the country ; but the motive power which ultimately proved irresistible came from within, and not from without, the Universities. It was Fellows of Colleges, who resolutely insisted on vindicating the national character of the Universities, and not the nation at large which forced upon them an unwelcome obligation.

The University Tests Abolition Act was carried in 1871, and in the following October Mr. Gladstone addressed a letter to the Vice-Chancellors of Oxford and Cambridge, asking whether the Government could rely on the co-operation of the Universities and Colleges, in the event of a Royal Commission being appointed to inquire into academical property and revenues. The reply was favourable, and the Commission was issued in January, 1872. Its functions were strictly limited to investigation, and to matters of finance, no power being entrusted to it either of passing judgment on the present application of University and College endowments, or of suggesting a redistribution of them—much less of entering on general questions of University reform. Many such questions had inevitably arisen at both Universities in the period of rapid growth succeeding the Acts of 1854 and 1856. At Oxford, the anomalies chiefly felt were the defective constitution of Congregation, whereby the Professors and working Tutors were liable to be swamped by a mixed multitude of chaplains and other resident Masters, the want of larger resources for Professorial teaching as well as for the maintenance of University establishments, the reservation of nearly half the Fellowships to persons in or about to enter Holy Orders, and the rule of tenure under which the most useless Fellow of a College may retain his position for life by virtue of celibacy, while the most useful must resign it on marriage, even though engaged in College tuition. At Cambridge this last grievance was further aggravated in several Colleges, by the preposterous condition that every Fellow must take orders within a certain term of years, or forfeit his Fellowship. Some of the disabilities which pressed most heavily on particular Colleges had been partially removed by new statutes,

with the sanction of the Privy Council, but the Privy Council became reasonably unwilling to legislate piecemeal, at the instance of fluctuating bodies of Fellows, and a demand for a supplementary Reform Act was gaining strength at both Universities, when Mr. Gladstone consented to appoint a purely financial Commission, as a preliminary step to further legislation. How far this was a politic act may perhaps be doubted, and it is certain that it would never have been taken, had it been foreseen that it would rest with a new Administration to propose or to resist a redistribution of Academical revenues. However, the statistical facts have now been placed before the public, in a somewhat misleading form it may be, but still with a completeness never before attained. It is these facts which it now remains for us to examine and to interpret.

Here followed an analysis of University and College revenues, gross and net, as ascertained by the Commissioners' Report, of the preliminary outgoings, and expenditure under trust deeds, and of the application of the residue in payments to Heads of Colleges, College Officers, and Scholars or Exhibitioners.

We now approach that which has been denounced, in no measured language, as a ruinous waste of academical resources—the appropriation of some 205,000*l.* (including a very small contribution from trust-property) to College Fellowships. Here, if anywhere, we find a large fund on which Parliament may draw, if it thinks proper, for purposes of University reform or extension. We have seen how very little reduction can be effected elsewhere in University or College expenditure, and even if it were possible to realise a large surplus by trenchant economy, there would be paramount claims upon it for the better endowment of existing Professorships, and the sustentation of existing institutions. It is upon the endowments now applied to Fellowships that academical reformers of every class rely for the means of carrying out their various schemes; and as the case is often argued upon a very imperfect knowledge of the essential facts, it may be well to state these in a succinct form.



There are, in round numbers, 360 Fellowships at Oxford and somewhat more at Cambridge, so that, allowing for vacancies and temporary suspensions, we may probably take 700 as the extreme number of existing Fellows, and 300*l.* a year as the extreme average value of a Fellowship. The general mode of election, and conditions of tenure, are clearly explained in an able paper read before the last Social Science Congress by Mr. Charles Stuart Parker, formerly a Fellow and senior Tutor of University College, Oxford. 'According to the present practice, the new Fellows are elected by the existing Fellows of a College, after open competitive examination, in Oxford conducted always by the College, with the aid of assessors, if necessary, in special subjects. In Cambridge the smaller Colleges elect upon the results of the University examinations. At Oxford a candidate is elected by any other College as freely as by his own; at Cambridge he must be already a member of the College electing. With this exception as regards Cambridge, the Fellows are supposed to be, and speaking broadly they are, the ablest and most distinguished students, selected with great impartiality soon after taking their Bachelor's degree, in general before the age of twenty-five. Once elected, for the most part they have no special duties, but are bound in conscience to the best of their ability and judgment to promote the interests of their College and of their University as a place of religion, learning, and education. Most Fellowships are tenable for life, being vacated only on marriage, or on obtaining a fixed income from other sources of 500*l.* or 600*l.* a year.'

It appears, however, from a return furnished to a Committee of the House of Lords in 1870, that half of all the Fellows at Cambridge, and nearly half of those at Oxford, were then in Holy Orders, or under the obligation of proceeding to Holy Orders, subject only, in three cases, to an exception in favour of those holding College offices. A larger proportion of clerical than of lay Fellows reside in College and take part in tuition, because they have a more or less remote prospect of settling on a College living, and for the

same reason the succession of clerical Fellows is somewhat more rapid. Mr. Parker calculates the average time for which Fellowships are held at about ten years; from which it follows that above thirty are filled up annually at each University.

It is admitted on all hands that Fellowships are now awarded, with the rarest exceptions, upon the strictest considerations of academical merit; and it may be confidently asserted that no other public appointments are less tainted—if, indeed, there be any so little tainted—with the suspicion of favouritism. Still, there is a vague impression abroad that many of them are carried off by young men of rich parentage, and that, instead of stimulating their possessors to further exertion, they are apt to deter them from embarking on active careers, and to encourage cultured indolence. These are impressions which can only be dispelled effectually by evidence of a kind which it is very difficult to procure. Some light, however, may be thrown upon the matter by the examination of a typical sample; and a careful analysis of a body of forty-nine Fellows belonging to three Colleges, differing from each other in size and character, leads to results which are not devoid of interest. It appears that no less than sixteen of the whole number are sons of clergymen, and two of Dissenting ministers, eight of men engaged in trade or commercial business, five of solicitors, four of landed proprietors, four of yeomen and tenant farmers, three of employés in the Civil Service, two of medical men, one of a member of Parliament, one of a schoolmaster, one of a Scotch factor, one of a military officer, and one of a clerk or accountant. In short, all but a trifling percentage are drawn from the hard-working professional class; and it may be stated with some confidence that not one is in possession of or heir to a considerable fortune. A similar inquiry into the present occupation of the same forty-nine Fellows shows that seventeen are engaged in College tuition, five hold other College offices, three are University professors, two are preparing themselves for College tuition, two are masters of

schools, two are parochial clergymen, four are barristers, four are engaged in literary work, one is a physician, and one a medical student, one is in the Civil Service, and one is an artist; while of the six who have no regular occupation, one is travelling for his health, and three at least are *emeriti*, having given their best years to the service of their Colleges and the University.

These facts speak for themselves, and the inference which they suggest is, in the main, a true one. So far as can be ascertained, fully half the Fellows of Oxford Colleges are resident, and nearly all the resident Fellows are engaged in public or private tuition. Even of the non-resident Fellows, very few fail to attend College meetings, many perform useful work for their Colleges, and the vast majority are earnestly and honourably employed, being very often indebted to their Fellowships alone for the means of subsistence during the earlier stages of their professional careers. The class of promising graduates converted into *dilettanti* loungers by the enervating influence of Fellowships has scarcely any existence, except among the delusions of the non-academical mind. Not only so, but it is capable of proof that College Fellowships, instead of enervating those who obtain them, have produced a larger proportion of men eminent in Church and State than most of their defenders would venture to claim for them. In order to become satisfied of this, we have only to inspect the catalogue of Fellows elected during the present century at Oriel College, where open competition was first established at Oxford, and at Trinity College, which is not only the largest College at Cambridge, but virtually the only one which conducts an effective Fellowship examination. The list of Oriel Fellows, dating from 1800 downwards, exhibits but ninety-two names; yet a full third of these are the names of men who have made themselves known in the world, and among them are the names of Davison, Whately, Keble, Hampden, Thomas Arnold, Hartley Coleridge, J. H. Newman, Pusey, Bishop Fraser, and Matthew Arnold, besides others which may yet become famous. The list of Trinity Fellows for the

same period, though four times as long, contains a smaller proportion of eminent names, like those of Sedgwick, Whewell, Thirlwall, Macaulay, and Airy, but is still richer in the names of men who have vindicated Fellowships against the reproach of enfeebling moral or intellectual vigour by rising to high stations in various practical callings. It would be easy to multiply similar arguments, as, for instance, by citing the present bench of English archbishops and bishops, twenty-two of whom were educated at Oxford or Cambridge, and fifteen of whom were Fellows of Colleges. If it were possible to lay before the public a list of Oxford and Cambridge Fellows who have attained leading positions in the great educational profession, in the Law, in the various Government offices, and even in the commercial world, little more would be heard of the notion that Fellowships quench ambition, or bar the road to success; and we might, perhaps, have to combat the counter-objection that Fellows of Colleges start with an unfair advantage in the race of life.

But no plea for the utility of collegiate endowments would be complete without a reference to one example, at once the most illustrious in the history of science, and the most representative in the history of the Fellowship system. If ever there was a genuine product of that system, it was Sir Isaac Newton. His biographer tells us that on matriculating at Cambridge in his nineteenth year, as a subsizar of Trinity, he manifested no presage of future greatness, and his transcendent superiority to his University contemporaries was probably unknown even to himself.

‘No friendly counsel had regulated his youthful studies, and no work of a scientific character had guided him in his course. In yielding to the impulse of his mechanical genius, his mind obeyed the laws of its own natural expansion, and following in the line of least resistance, it was thus drawn aside from the precipitous paths which it was fitted to climb, and the unbarred strongholds which it was destined to explore. When Newton, therefore, entered Trinity College, he brought with him a more slender portion of science than at

his age falls to the lot of ordinary scholars. . . . Cambridge was consequently the real birthplace of Newton's genius—her institutions sustained his mightiest efforts, and within her precincts were all his discoveries made and perfected.'

He was admitted to a Fellowship at the age of nearly twenty-five, an industrious but obscure mathematician, who must otherwise have sought a livelihood in some profession or trade. He resigned it at the age of fifty-nine, having ennobled his College, his University, and his country, by those immortal discoveries which, viewed across the interval of two centuries, still rank foremost and highest among the achievements of human intellect. To assume that Newton would have become the first of natural philosophers without the aid of a Trinity Fellowship, is as chimerical as to assume that Thomas Aquinas would have become the first of mediæval theologians without having entered a Dominican convent, or Raffaele the first of modern painters without having resided at Florence and Rome. Yet the contributions of Newton alone to science assuredly outweigh in mere pecuniary value all that has been spent on Trinity Fellowships from his day to our own.

It is true that Newton was a resident Fellow, but it is also true that his Fellowship was a pure sinecure, and subject to no conditions of residence: and this was the footing upon which the Oxford Commissioners of 1850 deliberately recommended that all Fellowships should be placed. 'We are by no means disposed,' they say, 'to impair the value of Fellowships as rewards by annexing to them the statutable condition of residence. . . . When the University shall have been put in a condition to offer sufficient inducements to enable it to retain the best men in its service, it may with safety leave them to follow their inclinations. Fellows thus elected may safely be allowed to pursue the career which they deem best for themselves. They will serve the University in their several professions more effectually than they could serve it by residence within its walls.' If this judgment is to be reversed, the reversal should at least be founded on a serious

consideration of its probable effect on English society. In Germany, we are told, Fellowships are not found necessary; but in Germany the want of Fellowships is partly supplied by a far more complete organisation of Professorial teaching and a far more effective recognition of literary merit by the State. In the United States that want is keenly felt, and the 'waste of resources' deplored by the most cultivated Americans is the waste caused by the attraction of money-making on the minds of the ablest students, and their premature withdrawal from the University. This is precisely the evil to which the English Fellowship system provides a counterpoise, and it is not too much to say that Oxford and Cambridge endowments operate as incentives to advanced study at the Scotch and London Universities. If a return could be procured of the Scotchmen holding Fellowships at Oxford, and of the graduates of the London University holding Fellowships at Cambridge, it would be seen how much these ill-endowed Universities owe to their wealthier sisters. Even if the Fellowship system were less fruitful in visible results than it can be shown to be—even if the modest competence which it offers to young men of literary and scientific capacity were more frequently thrown away—even if it were not one of the few avenues by which humble merit can attain promotion—its unseen influence in raising the standard of culture throughout all the learned professions, in Parliament, in official life, and, above all, in the Press, would still remain to be estimated. Perhaps, upon taking stock of these and many other collateral benefits which it derives from the Fellowship system, the Nation may arrive at the conclusion that, after all, no other 205,000*l.* of public money is more profitably spent, and that, regarded simply as an experiment, that system does not compare unfavourably with far more costly experiments in gunnery and naval architecture.

Here followed suggestions for a reform of the Fellowship system, for a moderate increase of the Professoriate, for the creation of a Common University Fund, and for the affiliation of Local Colleges.

The main results of our inquiry may be summed up in a

very few sentences. Though it is possible to alter the present application of Academical Endowments for the better, it would be far easier to alter it for the worse; and a recognition of the great services actually rendered by the Universities to the Nation, is the only sound basis for a new measure of University reform. The leading object of such a measure should be to strengthen the Universities, as fountains of educational and intellectual life, by increasing the Professorial staff; by extending the University libraries, museums, galleries, and lecture rooms; by fostering unremunerative study, as well as scientific training for professions, within College walls; by treating both Scholarships and Fellowships as designed to raise up an aristocracy of education; by relieving Colleges of all ecclesiastical trammels; and by making them living parts of the Universities, without destroying their corporate individuality. The secondary object, in order of importance but not of time, should be to bring the Universities into organic connection with local 'faculties,' or rather with collegiate institutions, in great cities, by means of affiliation or otherwise. To effect these objects the aid of Parliament will be necessary, inasmuch as even if it were legally possible for the Universities and Colleges to legislate on so large a scale, with the approval of the Crown, it would be morally impossible for so many independent societies to legislate in perfect unison with each other. The recent failure of an attempt to establish a system of self-taxation among Oxford Colleges was not required to prove how vain it is to expect that a complete and harmonious scheme for their own reorganisation will be initiated by the Universities themselves. The official responsibility of framing the scheme must be undertaken by a body representing either the Crown or the Legislature, but its details will have to be wrought out, as its principles have already been thought out, by Oxford and Cambridge men of a like spirit with those who for twenty-five years have so earnestly and so unselfishly laboured to nationalise both the endowments and the culture of the old English Universities.

*THE INFLUENCE OF THE OLDER ENGLISH  
UNIVERSITIES ON NATIONAL EDUCATION*

A paper read at the Social Science Congress, Brighton, in October, 1875.

I

THE influence actually exercised by the English Universities on National Education is far more considerable than is commonly supposed. In the year 1868, it was alleged by so high an authority as Mr. Matthew Arnold, that in this country there was then but one matriculated student for every 5,800 of population; whereas in the whole of Germany there was one matriculated student for every 2,600 of population, and Prussia alone numbered 6,362 students in its eight Universities. Now, without stopping to inquire whether Mr. Arnold's estimate of matriculated students in England was correct for the year 1868, we may satisfy ourselves by a simple reference to University Calendars that it is not even approximately correct for the year 1875. At the beginning of this year, there were 2,440 undergraduates at Oxford, either on the books of the various colleges and halls, or enrolled as unattached students. A certain deduction, it is true, must be made for non-resident undergraduates, but these cannot exceed one-sixth of the whole, and the number of resident students at Oxford may safely be stated at about 2,000. The number of resident students at Cambridge, after making a similar allowance, will be found to exceed 1,800,<sup>1</sup> and those at Durham amount to 68, besides 61 in the College of Medicine, and 62 in the College of Physical Science, at Newcastle. The University of London outnumbers either Oxford or Cambridge in the nominal aggregate of its matriculated students. Even if we reject a large proportion of these as non-effectives, and

<sup>1</sup> This number must have been greatly understated.



recognise none but those who actually pass the matriculation examination, or actually present themselves for some intermediate examination in a single year, we cannot reckon the effective strength of the London University at less than 1,200 undergraduates. They are not bound to residence, as in the older Universities, but many of them are not only residing but receiving a regular academical education in such collegiate institutions as University College, King's College, and Owens College at Manchester.

We are not informed whether the Prussian muster-roll of 6,362 students includes all those on the books, or only those in actual attendance on academical lectures. However this may be, it is clear that England and Wales contain a gross total of more than 6,000 matriculated University students, and a net total of more than 5,000 students, or about one to every 4,500 of population; in addition to all the students of academical age in Colleges specially connected with religious denominations, Theological Colleges, Naval and Military Colleges, Engineering Colleges, and so forth, not to speak of all those preparing under private tuition for the Home or Indian Civil Service. It may well be doubted whether the University system could not be so developed as to embrace a great many of these supernumeraries; and, still more, whether a much larger proportion of the mercantile classes ought not to be drawn within it; still, in the meantime, it is satisfactory to know that we are not so far behind Germany as we are sometimes told in the mere number of our University students.

But the practical influence of the older Universities on National Education is no more to be measured by the mere number of their students than the influence of Parliament on national policy is to be measured by the number of its members. Even when the number of students at Oxford and Cambridge was much smaller than it is at present, Oxford and Cambridge virtually governed the whole course of higher education throughout England. College Scholarships, with the prospect of succession to College Fellowships, were the

most substantial rewards open to aspiring schoolboys; and since these, as well as University degrees and honours, were to be won by proficiency in classics and mathematics alone, classics and mathematics were the staple, if not the exclusive, subject of teaching in public schools and grammar schools. Every school of reputation professed, above all, to prepare boys for the Universities, and notwithstanding that only a small minority of boys actually proceeded thither, the instruction of all the rest was limited and fettered by University requirements. It has at last become an acknowledged duty of public schools to educate boys for other careers besides the learned professions, and to qualify them, if possible, for passing non-academical examinations, such as those for the Army and Civil Service. On the other hand, the Universities, by wisely extending their own narrow curriculum, are rapidly bringing the new studies within the range of their control, and, by undertaking the office of Examining Boards on a very large scale, they have strengthened to an extraordinary degree their former hold on secondary education. It had long been the habit of the more eminent public schools and grammar schools to invite the aid of University examiners in awarding exhibitions, or testing the results of school-work in the higher forms. But the indirect and irregular influence thus exercised by the Universities through irresponsible examiners was as nothing compared with the influence now acquired by means of the examinations conducted under the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board, of the Local Middle-class Examinations organised independently by Oxford and Cambridge, of the Cambridge examinations for women, and of the examinations which form a part of the so-called Cambridge Lecture-system established in a large number of populous centres. It is not too much to say, that by forming this widespread network of examinations and occupying the centre of it, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge have virtually made themselves arbiters of learning over the great mass of schools above the elementary grade, and assumed some of the most important functions

exercised by the Ministry of Education in other countries. If their governing bodies should deliberately resolve on substituting natural science for literature as the groundwork of liberal education in England, or relegating Greek to the limbo of oblivion whence it was rescued by the pioneers of the Renaissance, it is more than doubtful whether there is any authority capable of resisting them, unless it be that of the scholastic profession itself, trained in the classical and mathematical lore of which Oxford and Cambridge have been hitherto the strongholds.

We here light on a second cause of the vast educational power wielded by the older Universities. This is the fact that so many of those who are destined to guide the educational movement, directly or indirectly, have themselves passed under the discipline and teaching of Oxford or Cambridge. As Professor Seeley remarks in an able Essay on Liberal Education in Universities, 'the Universities are practically our normal schools—the places where our schoolmasters are trained.' All the head-masters of the fifteen leading public schools, nearly all the head-masters of 180 metropolitan and provincial grammar schools, and most of the classical assistant-masters in these schools, are graduates of Oxford or Cambridge, while the academical element largely preponderates among the masters of private schools and private tutors of the superior class. If an University education is no longer the one avenue of approach to learned professions, still the great body of clergymen, and of barristers, all the bishops, and nearly two-thirds of the judges, are *alumni* of English or Irish Universities. The Bar, it is true, has no direct relation to National Education, though it regulates the professional studies of all who seek admission to it, and contributes sensibly to fix the general standard of culture in society. But the older Universities, by virtue of their connection with the Church, are responsible for the guidance of National Education to an extent which it is hardly possible to exaggerate. It is clergymen educated at these Universities who not only are the sole representatives of learning in most

country parishes, but manage the great majority of parochial schools which are not under School Boards, and, where School Boards have been established, clergymen educated at these Universities have certainly not been the least active or influential members of them. The predominance of the older Universities in the direction of National Education is still more conspicuous in the *personnel* of the Education Office itself. The whole indoor staff of that office, consisting of secretaries and examiners, has been recruited from Oxford and Cambridge, with the exception of two gentlemen transferred from the old Educational Department of the Privy Council. Out of 123 school-inspectors for Great Britain, all but two or three are University men, and all but six or seven come from Oxford or Cambridge, or from the Scotch Universities. Not less marked is the prevalence of Oxford and Cambridge graduates on the staff of the Civil Service Commission, which now superintends the examinations for every branch of the public service. All the commissioners, secretaries, and examiners, both regular and occasional, have been selected with the rarest exceptions from one or other of the older Universities. It was Oxford and Cambridge men who originated and shaped the open competitions for the Civil Service of India, and the head-masters of the great public schools, all Oxford or Cambridge men, have been consulted at every turn in constructing the scheme of Army examinations. If we could follow the same line of inquiry into the whole administrative and political service of the State, we should find graduates of the older Universities filling high positions in a ratio out of all proportion to their numbers, even as compared with the wealthier classes of the population. The present House of Commons probably contains less than an average share of University culture, as it contains more than an average share of success in business; yet no less than 224 members are known to have been educated at Oxford or Cambridge, besides those educated at Scotch or Irish Universities. In Mr. Gladstone's original Cabinet, ten ministers out of fifteen were Oxford or Cambridge men; in the present

Cabinet, Mr. Disraeli is the only Minister who has not received an University education, ten out of his eleven colleagues being Oxford or Cambridge men, while the Lord Chancellor is a graduate of Dublin. But, perhaps the most potent of all educational agencies in a country like our own is what is known as the Press, with its infinite varieties of daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly publications. If it could be ascertained how largely English journalism and periodical literature are indebted to Oxford and Cambridge men for their present characteristics, and how largely English habits of thought are moulded by English journalism and periodical literature, it would furnish a crowning proof of the unseen but all-pervading influence exercised by those Universities on National Education.

## II

We have next to consider what the nature and tendency of this influence is—how far it is beneficial, and how far it is injurious to National Education. And, first, it must be admitted that for many centuries the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were not merely far behind the educational requirements of their time, but had grievously degenerated from their own historical traditions. It is probably true, as Mr. Lyon Playfair contends, that most of the oldest European Universities were evolved from professional schools, and the evidence which he produces of this fact may at least serve to warn us against an undue depreciation of professional studies. But, at all events, it is certain that, in the Middle Ages, Oxford and Cambridge were the great intellectual workshops of the nation, cultivating every art and science then held in esteem. The old *trivium* and *quadrivium*, childish as they may now appear, were a more comprehensive system of instruction, relatively to mediæval ideas and civilisation, than classics and mathematics are relatively to modern ideas and civilisation. A servile devotion to ancient literature and philosophy was not so unreasonable before the birth of modern literature and philosophy, and the neglect of experimental sciences which

Bacon condemned in the Universities of his own day was infinitely more venial in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. than it was in the reigns of William IV. and Victoria. There can be no doubt to what cause these shortcomings must be mainly referred. Though Adam Smith erred in asserting broadly that most of the European Universities were originally ecclesiastical corporations, instituted for the education of Churchmen, he did not err in regarding ecclesiastical ascendancy as the bane of their educational life. So long as Oxford and Cambridge were treated as clerical seminaries, rather than as national seats of learning and education, it was not to be expected that any kind of attainments would be effectively encouraged within them except such as might conduce to success in the clerical profession. All the endowments of the Colleges were practically devoted to the same object. The most valuable of them were only tenable by persons in or about to enter Holy Orders, and so far as fellowships or scholarships were employed to reward merit at all, they were employed as prizes for proficiency in classical scholarship or pure mathematics. Since the schools, both public and private, followed, as we have seen, the lead of the Universities, the whole educational growth of the country was dwarfed and stunted by the dogmatic immobility of institutions which ought to have been foremost in every advance of knowledge. It is satisfactory to know that, in this respect, greater progress has been made by Oxford and Cambridge within the present generation than had been made within the previous century. Nevertheless, the spell of ecclesiastical ascendancy is not altogether broken, and, if the sciences are no longer regarded as the handmaids of theology, academical interests are even now too often sacrificed to theological interests, either real or imaginary.

Another tendency which has contributed to cramp the expansive energies of the older English Universities, is the prevalent opinion in favour of establishing a common basis of liberal education for as many as possible of those about to enter learned professions or to fill important social positions

in the country. Had this principle been limited to school teaching, its operation might, on the whole, have been salutary. There are doubtless certain elements of education, both literary and scientific, which all gentlemen ought to possess, and the nation may derive a real advantage from a community of early impressions among its governing classes. This advantage would have been effectually secured, had the older Universities seen fit to enforce such an entrance-examination as might compel schools to send up boys thoroughly instructed in certain prescribed subjects. Unfortunately, the self-interest of inferior Colleges has prevented the adoption of any such measure. Hundreds of young men are yearly matriculated at the age of 18 or 19, with less knowledge of classics and mathematics than might fairly be expected from a boy of 15, and with no more than a smattering of any other subject. To employ three or four years of manhood in attempts to reach a *minimum* boyish standard in Latin, Greek, Euclid, and Algebra, is a miserable degradation of University studies, and in proposing to give an uniform 'general education,' wholly unworthy of the name, to a mixed multitude of pass-men, Oxford and Cambridge have grievously failed to appreciate their own proper responsibilities. Granted that something is gained by a system under which so many University students are engaged in the same intellectual pursuits, and have a large stock of ideas in common, the loss in variety, independence, and vigour of thought, is more than equivalent. If the older English Universities compare unfavourably in any respect with the Universities of Germany, and exert a less stimulating influence on the national mind, it is for want of what the Germans call freedom in learning and freedom in teaching. This freedom is perfectly consistent with the really valuable distinctive features of English University education, the domestic life within colleges, and the relation between tutor and pupil. Students might be left at liberty to pursue a special line of study from their first entrance to the University, and yet be subjected to as much control, both intellectual and moral, as may be thought

desirable, without forcing their various tastes and abilities into conformity with any Procrustean model. In a word, there may be a common basis of University training with an inexhaustible variety of University teaching; a certain family likeness and freemasonry among University men, with the greatest possible individuality of thought and multiplicity of accomplishments.

The cardinal virtues and the cardinal vices of scholasticism have been imported, through Academical influence, into every department of English education. If it be this influence which has kept alive a belief in the necessity of sound, accurate, and methodical teaching, it is this also which has converted into a dunce many a boy of fresh and vigorous intelligence. It was mainly this which, in former times, countenanced the notion that abstract forms of language and thought possess a higher educative value than concrete realities. It was mainly this which encouraged masters to neglect the perceptive faculties, and to overtax the conceptive faculties of young scholars. It was mainly this which favoured the old-fashioned prejudice against useful acquirements as beneath the dignity of the higher culture. It was mainly this which, by consecrating a few select fields of literature, branches of science, and systems of philosophy, clipped the wings of original speculation, and so far impoverished the intellectual resources of the nation.

Whatever services may be rendered by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in steadying and moderating the current of English ideas, they are certainly responsible, to some extent, for the inferiority of England to Germany in the spirit of special research. In Germany there are many teaching Universities, and the utmost liberty of study has long prevailed within each; in England there are but two important teaching Universities, and in both there used to be a prescribed curriculum to be passed through with little variation by every student. Were there no other difference between the two nations, this difference would go far to explain the comparative educational conservatism of England,



and we have already seen how easily this conservatism, filtering downwards from the Universities into the schools, would leaven the entire mass of English society, lowering the national conception of what is due to learning and science, as well as of what may be acquired by ordinary minds, without undue effort, during twelve or fourteen years of education. Having enjoyed for so long the exclusive privilege of marking a certain order of attainment with the official stamp of a degree, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge have been placed, to some extent, in the position of a national mint for regulating the educational currency. If this currency is somewhat depreciated in the eyes of foreigners, if we are indebted to Germany for the most scholar-like works on almost every subject, if an European reputation counts for too little beside rank and wealth in the estimation of Englishmen, and if Englishmen of European reputation are too often destitute of Academical culture, if England is far behind the Continent in technical education, if the Education Office dare not enforce in the elementary schools of England standards which hardly require to be enforced in Saxony or Switzerland,—on whom does the chief blame rest, if not on those institutions whose immense resources and unique prestige would have enabled them to support with irresistible power the upward struggle of intellectual progress against a combination of social forces seldom more adverse than at present?

### III

But a new spirit has come over the older Universities with the great reforms of the last twenty years, and the Academical mind is now more than abreast of public opinion in the appreciation of their capacity for still further development. Let us, then, inquire by what means this vast and increasing influence on National Education may be rendered more powerful for good. This question admits of a general answer which few will be found to dispute. The most important, if not the first, step to be taken, is to make Oxford and Cam-

bridge all that they ought to be, and are capable of becoming, within themselves. While we are seeking to propagate Academical culture abroad, let us make these Universities more fruitful nurseries of thought at home, and perfect, as nearly as may be, their machinery of teaching. There is no difficulty in indicating the principal reforms which are needed for this purpose. In order to place the control of studies and examinations in competent hands, the existing constitution of both Universities must be so far altered as to exclude chaplains, parochial clergymen, and other residents not engaged in education, from the right of voting on educational matters. In order to emancipate colleges from clerical interests, all fellowships must be thrown open to laymen, and no Archbishop or Bishop should be allowed to be Visitor *ex-officio*, with the power of subordinating educational to ecclesiastical policy. These and some other preliminary changes having been accomplished by legislative enactment, the Universities and Colleges may safely be left free to work out their own reorganisation under the superintendence of a Commission. Great as the differences between University reformers may appear to be, there is a very general agreement as to the principles upon which the University system ought to be reconstructed. What is wanted is not so much external guidance as external pressure, capable of overbearing selfish resistance, and compelling a number of independent corporations to act together for ends which most of them acknowledge to be desirable.

It is admitted on all hands, for instance, that without an effective entrance examination, to exclude those who have not mastered even the rudiments of a liberal education, and to defeat the conspiracy of bad schoolmasters with bad college tutors, neither University can discharge its proper functions. In the Middle Ages, when schools hardly existed, and University students entered as boys, grammar and arithmetic might be a necessary part of University instruction; in these days, a student ignorant of grammar and arithmetic should be sent back to learn them at school. Let the Universities,

after due consideration, agree to require of all candidates for matriculation a *minimum* of general culture, and thenceforth abandon any attempt to impress a single type of general culture on all their students, by exacting from them a preliminary qualification in Arts. It will then become possible so to co-ordinate the Academical curriculum under various 'Schools' or 'Faculties' as to embrace both those studies which have a purely educational value, and those which serve as an useful preparation for professions. The studies represented by the Faculty of Arts,—classics and mathematics, logic and philosophy,—will continue to be cultivated mainly for their own sake; law and medicine will be cultivated mainly for the sake of their professional utility; and the Universities will gain quite as much as the professions by placing the latter studies on an equal footing with the former.

It signifies little whether professional schools were the historical germ of Universities or Universities the historical cradle of professional learning, if by thus contributing to liberalise the professions the Universities may derive a new spring of educational life. Now, it is certain that young men will devote themselves far more earnestly to studies which have a visible bearing on their future professional success, and there is not the smallest reason to suppose that studies which conduce to professional success are, for that reason, less useful as instruments of mental gymnastics. The assumed antagonism between utilitarian and non-utilitarian education rests, in truth, on a confusion of thought. What is really enervating to a student's mind, and unworthy of Academical education, is not useful knowledge, but any kind of knowledge, and especially useless knowledge, taught in a perfunctory or slovenly way. To an University, nothing in human science or art should be common or unclean, and the golden saying of Cicero—*Omnes artes quæ ad humanitatem pertinent habent quoddam inter se commune vinculum*—might well be inscribed over the portals of every Academical lecture-room. Surely, it would be a very perverse mode of correcting utilitarian propensities to establish a permanent divorce between com-

merce or engineering and University culture. Surely, the more excellent way is, on the contrary, to fortify young merchants or engineers against the narrowing effects of technical routine by a thorough training in principles—to adopt every study, however utilitarian its objects, but to lift it above empiricism by scientific teaching, and thus to penetrate society as deeply as possible with the true spirit of the scholar. As for degree examinations, against which so much has lately been written, it remains to be proved that ordinary students can dispense with such potent incentives to industry and such admirable methods of testing the quality of work. So far as sound and solid teaching has been disparaged by subservience to degree examinations, or independent thought stifled by mechanical cramming, a serious evil has doubtless been done. But this evil is neither inevitable nor by any means uncompensated by countervailing benefits. The remedy for it, where it exists, is to be sought in the better regulation, and not in the abolition, of degree examinations; but, after all, for one student whose genius has been cramped by reading for his degree, we might certainly find several whose desultory ideas have been fixed by the same process and directed into a profitable channel.

Another point admitted on all hands is, that no comprehensive development of the University can take place without drawing largely upon College endowments. But it does not follow that it is necessary to impair, in any essential respect, the integrity of the College system. The majority of fellowships might still be retained as rewards for Academical industry, but they should be allotted far more liberally to special proficiency in studies hitherto neglected; they should be tenable only for a limited period, and they should be subject to no condition of celibacy. The residue would be available for the more direct advancement, not of self-culture, but of Academical education in all its branches, and especially for a gradual and well-considered increase of the Professoriate. No jealousy of such an increase need be felt by the warmest admirer of collegiate life and discipline, for it is not only

compatible with the maintenance of these advantages, but would greatly enhance the value of them. If all Professorial chairs were attached to Colleges, not without regard to ancient ties and associations, each Professor would gain an Academical home, while each College would gain the nucleus of a learned society. It would follow, as a natural consequence, that Colleges would no longer be mainly distinguished from each other by political, ecclesiastical, or social characteristics, but rather by the prevailing tone of their educational interest. Instead of being known as ritualistic or rationalistic, conservative or liberal, aristocratic or plebeian, fast or slow, Colleges might come to be renowned, and to feel a pride in being renowned, as schools of Philology or of Philosophy, of History or of Law, of Mathematics or of Natural Science.

Professor-fellows, in short, constitute the missing link between University and College administration, as Professor-tutors are the missing link between University and College teaching. Though it would be requisite to found and endow many new professorships for which a present demand exists, and a few new professorships the demand for which must be preceded and created by the supply, most of the materials needed are actually at hand. The voluntary combination of Colleges for purposes of lecturing, and the consequent division of labour among College tutors, has been carried so far at Oxford as to reduce appreciably both the attendance at professorial classes and the profits of private tuition. In other words, it has been found that College lectures were ineffective chiefly because the students were ill-assorted, and because the lecturers had neither time nor adequate motive for continuing to be learners. Let the inter-collegiate arrangements which have already so greatly improved the quality of College lectures, be placed under University—that is, under professorial—superintendence, and the abler College tutors would be transformed, in effect if not in name, into sub-professors or prælectors, without forfeiting their former position.

While the purely educational function of the Universities could not fail to be invigorated by this change, post-graduate

study and independent research would equally receive a fresh impulse. If a German professor were to visit the University of Oxford or Cambridge, with their splendid endowments and sumptuous buildings, their noble libraries and museums, their short terms and their long vacations, it is assuredly not the want of facilities or leisure for profound investigations that would strike him with amazement. On the contrary, remembering the meagre appliances by the aid of which so many of his countrymen have produced masterpieces of learning or scientific analysis, during intervals snatched from assiduous teaching, he would justly regard the lot of an English professor as singularly favourable to an earnest and lifelong pursuit of philosophical truth. If the spirit of original speculation is ever to be kindled into greater activity at Oxford and Cambridge, it will not be through a diminution in the average number of lectures required of each professor, still less through a lavish creation of Academical sinecures, but through a judicious increase in the number of professors and a proper redistribution of subjects among them, with due provision for enlisting and rewarding the services of men who may be engaged in the real advancement of knowledge outside the Universities. It has lately been proposed, with this object, by an influential Committee of the Oxford Council, that the University should be empowered to appoint extraordinary professors, 'of eminent qualifications,' as well as occasional readers, nor is there any good reason why such auxiliaries should not sometimes be foreigners. It is also proposed that power should be obtained 'to make occasional grants to individuals for the purpose of carrying on special work in connection with the studies or institutions of the University.' The funds to be thus dispensed by the University must of course be contributed by the Colleges, which would be further enabled to confer fellowships without examination upon persons of approved distinction who may be willing to reside and prosecute scientific or literary researches, too costly perhaps for their private means, but likely to have a permanent value. No one who knows the Universities will doubt that

Academical opinion is ripe for these and other progressive measures in the same direction. If they have not been already carried out by voluntary legislation, it is partly because Academical action seldom keeps pace with Academical opinion, and partly because they cannot be carried out fully without the assistance of Parliament. Were all statutory obstacles removed, and a Parliamentary Commission armed with authority to issue ordinances having the force of law, in the last resort, most of the difficulties now felt would vanish, and it would probably never be necessary to exercise that authority, except against one or two Colleges notorious for their adherence to abuses.

The second means of enhancing the beneficial influence of the older Universities on National Education is to extend the sphere of their Academical system, by affiliating existing local institutions, by founding local University Colleges, or by otherwise colonising the provinces from Oxford and Cambridge. The object of such proposals must not be confounded with that of the Cambridge-Lecture system already mentioned. The Cambridge lectures differ from the lectures delivered in ordinary local institutes, only in so far as the University of Cambridge guarantees the competence of the lecturers, and conducts a voluntary examination of the students. However valuable the results of this system may be, it cannot be regarded as a substitute for the University teaching, still less for the collegiate discipline which Oxford and Cambridge, with all their faults, afford to resident students. On the other hand, experience shows that if the present conditions of residence be rigorously exacted, the great majority of Englishmen in the manufacturing and professional classes are likely to remain strangers to real Academical culture. The abolition of Tests has done something, and the expansion of the University curriculum may do more, to popularise Oxford and Cambridge; but life is too short, and the period required for apprenticeship to business is too long, to admit of most young men destined for unlearned professions residing in an University town up to the age of two or three and

twenty. Nor is this want to be met by the institution of local Universities. If the example of Germany may be pleaded in favour of multiplying Universities, that of the United States may be pleaded against it, and Great Britain resembles the United States far more closely than it resembles Germany in the character and circumstances of its middle classes. Where the State controls every department of civil life, and takes the Universities under its patronage, there will naturally be a more general demand for high University education in all classes of the community, and in all parts of the country. Where the commercial spirit rules supreme, where professions are open, and where no premium on high University education is offered by the State, local Universities will be apt to degenerate, as they have degenerated in America, into little more than high schools. The failure of Durham as a classical University proves almost conclusively that, in this age of railways, those who desire to obtain University education of the Oxford and Cambridge type prefer to seek it at Oxford or Cambridge. Since these Universities actually exist, since they differ from each other quite widely enough to secure a wholesome competition, since they possess in a remarkable degree the respect of the nation, in spite of their many shortcomings, and since they are admirably supplemented by the London University, what reason can there be for instituting new degree-giving bodies? There is literally nothing which a local University could do which could not be done far better by an affiliated local College, acting as a living offshoot or branch of Oxford or Cambridge. Let us suppose that such an affiliated College were established at Liverpool or Birmingham, with a staff of professors and lecturers appointed or accredited by the parent University—two things would remain to be settled, the conditions upon which its students should be accepted as members of the University, and the Academical status of its teaching body. It has been proposed, and it appears to be a reasonable proposal, that regular attendance upon lectures at an affiliated local College for two years should be allowed to count as one year's resi-



dence at the University, whether at the beginning or at the end of the Academical course. On similar grounds, it would appear to be reasonable that professorial or tutorial service in an affiliated local College should count as service within the University itself, at least for the purpose of enabling the professor or lecturer to hold a fellowship longer than might otherwise be permissible. The students of a College established on such a basis would consist of three elements, those attending lectures with a view to subsequent residence and graduation at Oxford or Cambridge, those attending lectures after residence but prior to graduation at Oxford or Cambridge, and those attending lectures without aspiring to an University degree.

It would be among the main objects of an affiliated local College to supply an organic connection between secondary, if not also primary, schools and the older Universities. This is not the place to consider in detail the means whereby such a connection may be wrought out and fitted into our national system of education, but it is evident that University and College exhibitions, tenable for a limited period at affiliated local Colleges, might form an invaluable part of it. In this way, and to this extent, affiliated local Colleges might derive benefit from Academical endowments, but it would be a waste of Academical endowments to employ them in localising University education, instead of in attracting students to Oxford and Cambridge, where the same resources can be employed to much better profit. So far, therefore, as these Colleges were not self-supporting, they would depend, and ought to depend, on local guarantees; and in any great town where no sufficient local guarantees would be forthcoming, the proof would be decisive that no sufficient demand existed to justify the foundation of a local affiliated College.

#### IV

To elevate and to extend the influence of the older Universities on National Education—such, in a word, are the ends to be steadily kept in view by University reformers.

Happily, these ends, though distinct, are by no means conflicting, but, on the contrary, are only to be attained by simultaneous and harmonious efforts. The more exalted the standard of literary and scientific culture reached at Oxford and Cambridge, the more worthily the dignity of learning is there maintained, and the more boldly every inferior ambition is there rejected, the stronger the hold that Oxford and Cambridge will acquire on the confidence of the people. On the other hand, the more closely they are brought into contact with the great industrial movement of the age, the less amateur, so to speak, will become the spirit of study within the Universities themselves, the more eager their pursuit of knowledge, and the more earnest their recognition of their noble mission—a mission which embraces not merely the broader and deeper cultivation of the national intellect, but the revival, it may be, of a taste for plain living and high thinking in English society. If the measures here suggested appear at first sight too modest to be very efficacious for such a purpose, let it be remembered how much can be effected by simple reforms, where they are founded on a self-acting principle. The present generation fully realises that knowledge—that is, practical knowledge—is power; the fact of which it needs to be convinced is that knowledge of this kind is to be acquired most effectually by passing through an University education. Let the older Universities once become the highest national school of Arts and Sciences as well as of Letters, and the love of wealth, now the arch-enemy of Academic culture, will be enlisted as its ally. Let the mercantile and professional classes once learn to regard the older Universities as their own, and the influx of new students, crowding the lecture-rooms of Professors, will give a life to professorial teaching which it can derive from no other source.

In the meantime, one thing is certain, and ought to be laid to heart. If the older Universities fail to render the nation this inestimable service of representing and guiding its highest intellectual aspirations, there is no other power in the realm capable of supplying their place. The State may

aid and regulate elementary education, but elementary State education naturally gravitates towards a *minimum* standard, and neither State patronage nor State control will ever hasten the advent of a second Newton. The Church may do much to vindicate spiritual against material interests, but if the Church were thrice as enlightened and truly national as it is, it could not be trusted or suffered to lead the nation in the pursuit of truth for its own sake. A multitude of petty local Universities, if they could be founded, might temper the vulgarity of purely mercantile communities, but they could not be expected to attract eminent men as teachers, or to command due respect as fountains of literary and scientific honour. This can be done by the older Universities, and by them alone, among existing English institutions. They and they alone can reconcile democracy with aristocracy, in the best sense of those much perverted words, through a graduated system of promotion by intellectual merit. They and they alone can oppose a corporate spirit and a venerable authority—the massive growth of ages—to plutocratic tendencies, which in this country, no less than in America, have deeply infected the springs of public virtue. They and they alone, by extending their empire ever more and more over the leading minds of the nation, can so influence National Education, as gradually but surely to ennoble national character.

*ADDRESS ON EDUCATION*

Delivered at the Social Science Congress, Cheltenham, October 1878.

THE progress of National Education in this country during the last thirty years, though recognised by all, is practically realised by very few even of those who, like ourselves, are specially concerned with it. No public documents, however comprehensive, would enable us to measure it, but, unhappily, no comprehensive report on National Education in all its branches is ever laid before Parliament. The Education Department, indeed, publishes annual returns which may be accepted as an authoritative and tolerably complete account of the advance made by Primary Education in England and Wäles, and those for last year were carefully analysed in a paper read at Aberdeen by our Hon. Secretary, Mr. Rowland Hamilton. The facts relating to workhouse schools may be gleaned from the Reports of the Local Government Board; the Charity Commissioners, now invested with the powers of the Endowed Schools Commission, annually record the result of their proceedings; and these sources of information are occasionally supplemented by papers compiled, under the order of Parliament, at the instance of some individual member. But there is certainly no compendious statement which could be placed in the hands of a foreigner as exhibiting the actual condition and growth of English education, Primary, Secondary, and Academical, for any single year; much less are there well-digested official materials for a comparison of its condition in 1878 with its condition in 1848. Believing that such a retrospect may be encouraging to faint-hearted advocates of National Education, and may also serve to indicate the direction in which further reforms are needed,

I will endeavour to review, within the smallest possible compass, what has been effected in the course of the last thirty years—a period covering but one human generation, and crowded with events which have too often diverted the public mind from any steadfast purpose of self-improvement. If we shall find reason to conclude that during this period National Education in England has made greater strides than during the previous century—we shall not be the more justified in shutting our eyes to its many shortcomings, or the less free to grapple with the open questions to be discussed in this department. However interesting it may be to compare the educational statistics of this country with those of continental nations or of the United States, it is far more profitable to ascertain the rate, and study the course, of educational progress at home. Comparative statistics of education in various countries are misleading, because they cannot be reduced to a common standard. The nominal proportion of scholars to population may be large, and yet the educational results may be meagre, if the average attendance be low or the average teaching inefficient. The proportion of illiterate soldiers depends in a great degree on the number of men annually enlisted and the mode of their enlistment, since recruits are most easily obtained from the lower *strata* of society. The proportion of men and women signing the marriage register with marks is a rough test of the depth to which popular education had penetrated ten or fifteen years earlier, but not of the depth to which it now penetrates. Moreover, though we have much to learn from the experience of foreign nations, we must not imagine that any system of National Education can be worked out in strict conformity with a foreign model, or otherwise than in harmony with the spirit and institutions of the people to be educated.

I. Here followed a review of the progress made by Primary Education in England between 1848 and 1878, as tested by the Reports of the Education Department on school-attendance and examinations.

But the Reports of the Education Department are not the

only evidence of the extent to which the spread of Primary Education has leavened the population within the past thirty years. We see its direct effects in the decreasing number of persons signing the marriage register with marks, of recruits unable to read or write,<sup>1</sup> of illiterate voters, and of labourers who, being 'no scholars,' can undertake no duties above those which a clever savage might perform. We see its indirect effect in the ever-increasing circulation of penny newspapers and other cheap literature, in the constant multiplication of popular reading rooms, in the overwhelming number of applications for clerks' places, and—we may reasonably believe—in the steady decline of pauperism and crime. The extraordinary diminution of juvenile offenders in the Metropolis, attested by the Commissioners of Police and by the Governors of Prisons, has exactly coincided with the enforcement of school attendance by the School Board officers, and as old criminals are usually developed out of young criminals, we may fairly expect the number of convictions to be still further reduced in future. Upon the whole, then, we have reason to congratulate ourselves on the progress of Primary Education during the short period under review. We may still have 'much leeway to make up,' but we have done the work of far more than one generation in the past thirty years, and our educational position, relatively to other countries, is far less humiliating than it was in 1848, when very few Englishmen were ashamed of it.

II. The history of Secondary Education in England during the last thirty years has not been less eventful, though it has been less directly shaped by legislative action. It is not too much to say that, in 1848, the ancient Public Schools, mostly founded in the 15th and 16th centuries, were still essentially Elizabethan in their curriculum of studies, in

<sup>1</sup> The last Triennial Report by the Director-General of Military Education, dated July 1877, shows that, whereas in 1873 the percentage of soldiers who could neither read nor write was 6·01, in 1876 it was 4·95; and that, whereas in 1873 the percentage of those in the first or 'better educated' class was 32·61, in 1876 it was 44·95.

their methods of teaching, and in the characteristic features of their internal government, no less than in their architecture and system of discipline. Of the great proprietary schools included in the Public Schools Calendar, some were then in their infancy, like Cheltenham and Marlborough; all the rest, including Wellington College, Haileybury, and Clifton, have sprung up since that date. The majority of them probably owe their origin to a spontaneous demand for a cheaper and somewhat less antiquated form of Public School Education than could then be obtained at Eton or Winchester, Rugby or Harrow. But there can be no doubt that all of them have largely profited by the discussion which preceded the appointment of the Public Schools Commission in 1861, by the Report of the Commissioners on nine of the ancient Public Schools, and by the influence of reforms subsequently carried out there in pursuance of the Public Schools Act. Very few of the Endowed Grammar Schools then reached even the low standard of the ancient Public Schools, in the range or efficiency of their instruction, and if a Grammar School won a high reputation at the Universities, it was usually by virtue of exceptional energy in its head-master, and not of any perfection in its organisation. As for the whole class of genteel Commercial Academies, they were already proverbial for pretentious inefficiency, and private schools for boys of the upper and middle classes were naturally content to follow the lead of Public Schools and Grammar Schools. Considered from a purely intellectual point of view, and relatively to its cost, the Secondary Education of England, thirty years ago, was in a still more backward state than its Primary Education, and even after the shortcomings of our Primary Education were freely acknowledged, the shortcomings of our Secondary Education were regarded by the national mind with indifference or self-complacency. Indeed, the first vigorous impetus given to Secondary Education must be dated after the Crimean War, and whatever has been done to bring it under the effective control of public opinion has been done, for the most part, within the last twenty years.

Here followed a review of the progress made by Secondary Education in England between 1848 and 1878, illustrated by the example of Eton, by the Reports of the Oxford and Cambridge Boards on Public Schools and Local Examinations, by the Report of the Charity Commission on Educational Endowments, by the rise of Public Day Schools for Girls, and by the growth of professional Colleges.

Nor must we forget either the stimulus imparted to secondary education by the new system of competitive examination for the public services, or the great, if not disinterested, assistance rendered to it by the much-abused class of 'crammers.' It was stated by Mr. C. S. Parker, in an able Paper read before the Aberdeen Congress, that in the year 1875 the Civil Service Commissioners examined nearly 4,000 candidates for over 1,000 appointments of the higher order, including first commissions in the Army, Woolwich Cadetships, Marine Cadetships, and various posts in the Civil Service of this country and of India. The great majority of these candidates were doubtless prepared, wholly or partially, by crammers. Now, so far as the art of a crammer is directed to arming his pupils with answers to probable questions, by *memoria technica*, or some equally mechanical process, it cannot be regarded with much respect from an educational point of view; though it may well be doubted whether it is not better for a human mind to be unscientifically overcropped than to be left absolutely fallow and overgrown with noisome weeds. So far, however, as crammers are successful in helping their pupils to master a modern language, a few books of Euclid, a period of history, or the geography of a country, in the shortest possible time, they must have practised effective methods of teaching not unworthy of imitation, and there is no want of charity in suspecting that a certain professional jealousy is mingled with the moral indignation of which they are so often the objects. After all, knowledge is valuable for its own sake, however it may have been acquired; and before we lavish contemptuous pity on a youth for having got up a useful subject too hastily, with the aid of a crammer, let us



be quite sure that, without the aid of a crammer, he would have got it up at all. It must at least be owned that the necessity of studying for competitive examinations under skilful guidance, rudely disturbing the reign of well-bred ignorance in high places, has operated as a powerful agent in the progress of Secondary Education.

III. The change that has passed over the older English Universities during the same period is not less remarkable or encouraging. Let us glance rapidly at the state of Oxford thirty years ago, bearing in mind that what applies to Oxford applies also in the main to Cambridge, where the academical system, though somewhat more liberal in a social and theological sense, was in some other respects even narrower and less elastic than at Oxford.

Here followed a description of the Oxford system before 1854, founded on that in 'The Universities and the Nation.'

The entire number of Oxford students, resident and non-resident, amounted in 1848 to less than 1,500, the number of Cambridge students being then somewhat greater. Of these, the great majority at both Universities were content with a mere 'pass,' and spent two or three years between their 'little-go' and 'great-go' examinations in acquiring a *minimum* of classical knowledge at the one, or of mathematical knowledge at the other, so meagre and elementary that it might well have been exacted at matriculation. 'Classics and Mathematics' were, indeed, the only subjects in which honours could be taken at either University, though 'Classics' at Oxford included Ancient History, Moral Philosophy, and Logic, while 'Mathematics' at Cambridge encroached on the domain of Physical Science. Notwithstanding the ease with which a pass-degree could be obtained in those days, the number of students graduating at Oxford in a single year rarely exceeded 300; the average yearly number of first-class men in the school of 'Literæ Humaniores' was 10 or 12, and of first-class men in the school of Mathematics, perhaps 5 or 6. Modern History, Law, Physical Science in all its branches,

except those strictly allied to Mathematics, and even Theology itself, were equally ignored in the honour-examinations of both Universities. Yet these examinations were all-powerful in governing the intellectual aspirations of students, and the earnest prosecution of literary culture or scientific research for its own sake, though not absolutely unknown, was certainly very rare. As for the extension of University influence to Secondary Education, or to semi-academical education outside Oxford and Cambridge, such an idea may have occurred to a few enlightened minds, but had never found expression in any practical scheme.

The reforms adopted by the Universities in anticipation of legislative interference, the reforms introduced by the Commissions appointed under Lord Aberdeen's Administration, the supplementary reforms by which the work of those Commissions has been followed up, and the operation of the University Tests Act, have transformed at once the constitution, the curriculum, and the educational character of both Universities. At Oxford there are now upwards of 2,500 matriculated undergraduates, including some 140 members of the new Keble College, and including also some 300 or 400 'unattached students,' belonging to no College, but with full Academical rights, and under the superintendence of special officers. University administration is now in the hands of a Council fairly representing the various classes of Academical society, checked by a vigorous little Parliament composed of resident masters and doctors. College administration is in the hands of Fellows, selected entirely by merit, and largely imbued with the spirit of reform. Though candidates for degrees are still required to qualify themselves in Latin and Greek, the study of ancient languages may be dismissed after passing the intermediate examination called Moderations, which also serves the useful purpose of breaking the time-honoured continuity of idleness between the 'little-go' and the 'great-go.' The honour-lists in the old school of 'Literæ Humaniores' are now much larger than in 1848, but new schools of Law, of History, of Natural Science, and of Theology,

have established themselves, on all but equal terms, side by side with the old schools of Classics or Mathematics, and those who take honours of the first, second, or third class in any non-classical school, are relieved from the somewhat humiliating necessity of 'passing' in Classics. Both Scholarships and Fellowships are freely offered for proficiency in these studies, and if they are not so often awarded to scientific candidates as to scholars, it is because Oxford still attracts a much larger proportion of advanced scholarship than of scientific ability. The list of Professors is now almost twice as long as it was in 1848, and the number of lectures given by Professors is many times as great, notwithstanding that College tuition has been largely improved and developed through inter-collegiate arrangements known at Oxford as 'the Combined Lecture System.' Natural Science, for special and obvious reasons, is almost exclusively taught by Professors and their assistants, for the most part at the University Museum—an institution also founded within the last 30 years. Nor has this vast increase of educational activity in Oxford been purchased by a diminution of literary or scientific results; on the contrary, learning and research have kept pace, as might be expected, with the greater energy of teaching. Though Oxford would not presume, and does not aspire, to compete with her German rivals in the multiplication of monographs edifying only to a select circle of *savants*, a collection of the independent works, and still more of the valuable articles in literary and scientific periodicals (not to speak of journals), written by Oxford Professors and Tutors in the course of a single year, would effectually silence those who affect to deplore the intellectual sterility of our older Universities. The impression that Oxford is mainly a clerical and aristocratic seminary would prove, on inquiry, to be equally obsolete. By means of open Scholarships and Exhibitions, as well as by the admission of 'unattached students,' belonging to no College, a very large infusion of plebeian and even of democratic elements has been imported into it, all religions are there mingled harmoniously, nor is it uncommon

to meet in the streets young men of Oriental race and complexion, wearing Academical costume. One or two Colleges may have succeeded in keeping themselves exclusive, but the University has become thoroughly cosmopolitan. Nearly the same may be said of Cambridge, which has always drawn mathematical aspirants from the humbler ranks in the North of England; and it is gratifying that such collegiate institutions as Girton College for the higher education of young women, and Cavendish College for that of youths chiefly destined to be farmers, have grown up under the shadow of that ancient University, and not without the support of its authorities.

Here followed a review of the University-extension movement, and of the work done by the University of London.

IV. It is now time for us to consider briefly certain weak points which remain to be strengthened, and certain open questions which remain to be settled, in the future development of National Education in England. Three such questions have been selected for special treatment at the present Congress, and I shall not anticipate their discussion.<sup>1</sup> Those to which I shall now refer are not perhaps more important than others which might be suggested, but have been forced upon my own attention in dealing practically with Primary, Secondary, and Academical Education.

Here followed a paragraph on irregularity of school attendance and 'capricious migration.'

1. It is on a gradual process of popular enlightenment that we must chiefly rely for any marked improvement in what may be called the social and civilising results of Elementary Schools in this country. Though England may compare

<sup>1</sup> These questions were the following:—

Is it desirable to establish Free Primary Schools throughout the country?

Is it expedient to increase the number of Universities in England?

In what way is it desirable to connect the system of Primary Schools with the Endowed and other Schools that supply Secondary Education?

favourably with France, and not very unfavourably with the United States, in the mere percentage of adults who can read and write, both French and American education are apparently superior to English education in their humanising influence on the people. A French peasant may be quite illiterate, ignorant of newspapers, and the ready dupe of political imposition, yet the brightness of his intelligence and the grace of his manners strike every English traveller. But then he is hardly ever stupified by drink, and history tells us that national characters and tastes are moulded by many other agencies besides mere schooling. Where a traditional sense of proprietorship has been fortified by a new sense of social equality, as in France; where every school imbibes the stimulating and restless atmosphere of commercial enterprise, as in America; or where every home is penetrated with the democratic spirit of Presbyterian Church-government, as in Scotland; a given amount of book-knowledge will go much further in sharpening the faculties than in the stagnant climate of an English country-parish. Nevertheless, in spite of express injunctions in the Education Code, it is impossible to be satisfied with the success of English Elementary Schools in civilising their scholars by inculcating 'good manners and language,' 'cleanliness and neatness,' 'consideration and respect for others;' and in this kind of cultivation the schools of Scotland must rank below those of England.

Nor can we afford to be content with the average proficiency even of those children who attend regularly enough to earn a grant in English schools. After making due allowance for the fact that many children of 9, 10, or 11, now forced into school under compulsory bye-laws, are perfectly raw material and might properly be classed with infants, as well as for the fact that under the present rules many scholars capable of passing their examination are excluded from it by default of attendance, we must still regard it as lamentable that only 270,317 children were presented last year in the three higher standards, and that nearly half failed to pass in three subjects.

Here followed remarks on shortcomings in the higher school teaching.

Happily, it is morally certain that each succeeding year will show a marked improvement. As School Boards multiply, and School Attendance Committees resolve to enforce as well as to frame bye-laws, both the amount and the regularity of attendance will be largely increased. As the schools are less flooded with older scholars ignorant of their letters, more and more will be presented in the higher standards. As methods of teaching become perfected in the hands of trained masters and mistresses, it will become possible to impart more knowledge in a shorter time. As young people reclaimed by schooling from barbarism and heathenism grow up and become parents, they will be less disposed than parents of the former generation to mar the refining influences of school teaching and school discipline by setting their children the example of bad habits and bad language at home.

But one thing more is needful. In the choice of subjects, as well as in the methods of teaching, we must strive to make every hour of schooling tell upon the practical wants of the scholar's future life. Let us never lose sight of the fact that Primary Education is not the first stage of education for the great mass of the wage-earning classes, but the whole of their education. Every page read should therefore, if possible, be a vehicle of useful knowledge, every sum worked out should call up the idea of concrete realities, every lesson in geography should enable the child to feel at home in thinking of distant localities. It is because it appeals so directly to a child's faculty of observation and sense of utility that Elementary Science deserves the place that Sir John Lubbock claims for it in Primary Education. If it be idle to suppose that young men will study what they believe to be useless as earnestly as what they know to be useful, merely for the sake of mental discipline, still more idle is it to suppose that children will give their minds to dull abstractions as readily as to something tangible and capable of being explained by experiment. Even as a mere instrument of mental discipline, Elementary

Science is certainly not inferior to Grammar, and if room could not be found in a school time-table for both these subjects, I should prefer to sacrifice Grammar. Those who contend that an Englishman cannot learn his own mother tongue correctly without the aid of abstruse grammatical formulæ are bound to show how it came to pass that all the great masterpieces of classical literature, which serve as models of style to modern authors, were produced by men who, so far as we know, were utterly ignorant of Grammar, and lived before it was invented. For the purpose of rapidly acquiring a foreign language, Grammar is of great value, and there are a very few broad grammatical rules which it may be well to impress upon children as part of their lessons in reading and writing; but I venture to express a doubt whether the more formal teaching of Grammar in Elementary Schools is not a waste of time grievously needed for subjects which not only discipline the mind but equip it for the battle of life.

Here followed a notice of the proposal for grouping children in the higher standards into Central Schools.

When the extravagance of School Boards is held up to public reprobation, and when it is inferred that, in proportion as Board Schools are substituted for Voluntary Schools, the general public will be heavily taxed, a great many things are forgotten. It is forgotten that School Boards, having to provide immediately for neglected districts without the aid of Government building grants, are compelled to buy sites, often at an exorbitant cost, to build schools of the best construction at the present high rate of building prices, and to pay the interest on sums borrowed for these purposes. It is forgotten that on them falls the whole burden of working the machinery of compulsion, by which Voluntary Schools equally benefit. It is forgotten that having to educate the most intractable class of children, and being expected to serve as a pattern of school organisation, they must needs employ an expensive class of teachers. Above all, it is forgotten that School Boards are doing work imposed upon them by the Legislature,

because voluntary effort had failed to do it; that if it were not done by School Boards it would have to be done by some other agency; and that, in this case, even if the new agency were voluntary, the money would not come from the clouds, but from one or other of the national pockets. The financial question between Voluntary or Board Schools is not a question between economy and waste; it is a question between two modes of raising a given revenue—between the eleemosynary support of schools by contributions from the clergy or a benevolent section of the upper class, and the public support of schools by contributions from the whole community. No doubt many ratepayers, who disdain to use Board Schools, would gladly send their children to be educated at Voluntary Schools, without paying either subscription or rates. But the poorer and less fastidious ratepayers have little reason to complain of the terms on which they obtain education at Board Schools for their children. Let us take the school-rate for London at *5d.* in the pound, and let us suppose a parent, with two children of school-age, occupying a tenement valued at *20l.* a year. He will thus pay *8s. 4d.* in rates, and perhaps *15s.* a year in school fees—*1l. 3s. 4d.* in all. But the real cost of schooling for two children will amount to about *5l.* a year, so that he will obtain it for less than a fourth of the cost-price. There are, of course, many advantages on the side of the Voluntary system, and it has yet to be proved that public spirit is so effective a motive as Christian zeal for the careful and conscientious management of schools. But the notion that equal results can be procured for less money under the Voluntary than under the Board system is a pure delusion which ought not to be sanctioned by official authority.

2. Perhaps the reform that is most urgently needed in Secondary Education is a comprehensive revision of the curriculum now adopted with too little variation by nearly all Grammar Schools and other schools of the same grade. Until very lately it was thought perfectly natural, and not otherwise than satisfactory, that full twelve years of life,



from 6 or 7 to 18 or 19, should be almost exclusively consumed in acquiring a very imperfect knowledge of two dead languages; for very few boys succeeded in appropriating the real treasures of Latin and Greek literature. This classical monopoly has at last been invaded, but the masters of Grammar Schools have not yet shaken off the impression that it is their principal duty to prepare a few boys for the Universities, where Classics and Mathematics are still in the ascendant. Now, what is Secondary Education for the vast majority of those who avail themselves of it? Secondary Education is the education of boys and girls who can afford to cultivate their minds during the whole period of growth, but no longer; just as Primary Education is the education of children who must earn their livelihood, as boys and girls, before they grow up, while University Education is the education of adults who can spare a few years of manhood to gain a greater maturity of culture. The main business of Elementary Schools is to give the best training for children about to be engaged in manual labour, due provision being also made for the very small minority capable of rising to schools of a higher grade, and the main business of Grammar Schools is to prepare the great mass of their scholars for commercial and professional careers, due provision being also made for the much smaller class destined for the Universities. To frame such a course of studies as shall best prepare youths for the requirements of commercial and professional life in these days is a task worthy of the highest educational statesmanship, but it is self-evident that modern requirements are no longer to be satisfied by an education which sufficed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when Latin and Greek constituted the staple of European literature, when Natural Science was barely struggling into existence, and when Englishmen had little occasion to go, or to correspond, beyond their own island. It is probable that Latin, as the key to so many of the modern languages and so much of modern thought, may still hold its own in Secondary Education, but I cannot doubt that Greek—notwithstanding that it is the language of the

New Testament—will ere long be classed among the luxuries, and not among the necessaries, of scholarship, even at the ancient Public Schools.

Here followed reasons against a Government Inspection of Secondary Schools.

3. It is the less necessary for me to dwell at any length on the vexed questions connected with University Education, because I stated my views on many of them in a paper read before the Brighton Congress, and there are none of those views which I desire to retract. The Legislature has since passed Acts for the further reform of Oxford and Cambridge, and Executive Commissions have been appointed to carry out the measures therein contemplated. The chief aim of these measures is to develop the educational resources of the University at the expense of the Colleges, and it is generally agreed that, within certain limits, this redistribution of funds is expedient, if not strictly in accordance with legal doctrines; but very grave differences of opinion exist as to the ultimate ideal to be kept in view, and I must not shrink from asserting, plainly and succinctly, my own convictions on this subject. I regard the Universities as essentially places of Academical education, and only incidentally as retreats or places of study for learned men. According to my conception, their primary and noblest function is the instruction and training of youth for the higher walks of professional and public life—not monastic self-culture or even the production of monographs, whether literary or scientific. So long as Classics and Mathematics with the other subjects embraced in the Faculty of Arts were the only subjects which English gentlemen cared to cultivate, the demand for teaching was admirably supplied by the better Colleges, and it would have been a sheer waste of public money to found new Professorships, when the existing Professors either did not lecture at all or lectured to almost empty benches. Now that the range of University studies is so largely and beneficially widened, the College system, invaluable as it is, has become inadequate

to provide the variety of teaching required, and, moreover, the peculiar exigencies of teaching in Natural Science point to a concentration of lecture rooms, with laboratories, museums, and other scientific accessories, under University superintendence. Hence the necessity for more Professors, and an extension of University establishments; and this necessity is further strengthened by the recent admission and constant accession of students attached to no College. Other contributions from the Colleges may be needed to found University, as distinct from College, Scholarships, and to organise University tuition in certain non-scientific subjects hitherto unduly neglected. When, however, it is proposed to go far beyond this, and to divert by wholesale revenues now invested in Fellowships in order to create a Professoriate on the scale of those at the German Universities, together with a number of pensions to reward or stimulate 'mature learning and original research,' I cannot but deprecate so revolutionary a change, in the interest of learning no less than in that of education.

The analogy between the English and German Universities is radically fallacious, because, in the absence of College tuition and discipline, the German Professor stands in the place both of the English University Professor and of the English College-tutor. As a tutor, he labours under the grievous disadvantage of having no strictly tutorial authority or responsibility; but at all events, and above all, he is an educator—not a sinecurist, despising the duty of imparting knowledge to common minds and wrapped up in his own speciality. The subject which he 'represents' may attract but a small class, but he teaches it all the more thoroughly; and the very last privilege which he would think of demanding would be the privilege of devoting himself to lifelong study, on full salary, without the obligation of teaching. The German Professors who have done most for the advancement of literature and science have been zealous and successful lecturers; and if the purely ornamental Professor would be out of place at Berlin, still more would he be out of place at Oxford or Cambridge. So long as the older English Univer-

sities retain that essentially collegiate character which constitutes their life, and so long as the intellect of the nation continues to be practical rather than speculative, a moderate number of working Professors, aided by a larger body of Tutors, acting in harmony with them and under their general superintendence, will be amply sufficient for every legitimate requirement of Academical education. Those who are capable of original investigations have six months of leisure in which to pursue them, and there is no reason why special grants should not be made from the University chest for special work of this kind, whether done by Professors or by others, of whom there will always be many, residing at Oxford and Cambridge for the prosecution of advanced study.

Here followed a quotation from my own letters in the 'Times' on the Fellowship-system.

That which is needed at our older Universities is not a root-and-branch destruction of their constitution and spirit, but, simply, a better organisation of their educational power; and this want of organisation is the grand defect of English National Education in all its branches. We have numerous and excellent Elementary Schools in all the large towns, but their distribution has been mostly governed by parochial and not by public considerations; many of them are under independent bodies of managers, and almost every one is managed on thoroughly 'insular' principles, being connected with no other elementary school by a system of gradation or division of labour, and with no school of a higher class by Scholarships or Exhibitions. School Boards have not been elected even in all the great towns; in smaller towns and country districts, their place is generally supplied by School-attendance Committees representing the Boards of Guardians. After all, schools for pauper children are outside the School Board system, and inspected under a separate department, while technical schools hardly exist at all. Our secondary Public Schools excel all others in the world as training-grounds for the formation of a manly character, but until very lately they

claimed the right of teaching as little as they pleased, unmolested by any external authority, and even now are not only exempt from official inspection, but subject to no such test of efficiency as a general 'leaving-examination.' As for our Military, Naval, Engineering, Agricultural, Theological, and other professional Colleges, they are scattered about the island, for the most part in healthy situations, but with a sublime disregard for concentration of teaching-power, and without a link to connect them with any other educational institution in England. Even the long-predicted ladder of educational promotion, reaching from the gutter to the Universities, still remains to be constructed, for though a boy of exceptional ability at a Grammar School has a fair chance of gaining a College Scholarship, the percentage of children passing from Elementary Schools to Grammar Schools is extremely small, and will not be materially increased, until Exhibitions of sufficient value to cover both the cost of schooling and the cost of maintenance shall be provided in sufficient number. Nor can I forbear to notice, among the many signs of defective organisation, the want of authorised text-books for Elementary Schools, and the elaborate but chaotic obscurity of the so-called New Code yearly issued by the Education Department, the result of successive revisions never reduced to order by a capable draftsman, and the cause of infinite perplexity to all concerned with the management of Elementary Schools.

Here followed a notice of proposals for establishing a general Educational Council.

I shall not enter here into the comparative merits of these schemes, but I will venture to point out that, while any Educational Council that may be formed must derive its powers from Act of Parliament, no such Council, however ample its powers, could supply the place of an Education Minister. No doubt, the extension of direct State control over the whole system of National Education in England would be equally inconsistent with English notions of liberty and with the

highest ideal of educational development. Hitherto Government has confined its direct action to laying down the conditions upon which State aid shall be granted to Elementary Schools, regulating the application of trust funds and creating new governing bodies in Endowed Schools and the Universities, and requiring that every child shall attend school up to a certain age. But in a multitude of indirect ways the province of Government overlaps the province of Education, and it is a grievous national misfortune that no Minister is charged with the duty of overlooking this province in its entirety, with a view to initiate any legislation that may be required, or at least to criticise with some authority the proposals of others. It is possible to be too superstitiously jealous of State interference in this sense, as if Parliament, or a Government responsible to Parliament, were some intrusive alien power, whereas it is nothing but the highest expression of the national will. On the other hand, it is quite possible to ignore unduly the danger of a narrow educational policy being stereotyped by a Council exclusively composed of Educationists, that is, producers of education, and hardly representing the public at large, that is, consumers of education. Most of the reforms in National Education effected during the last thirty years have, in fact, been originated by public opinion rather than by schoolmasters; but had public opinion been left to operate locally, instead of through an imperial Legislature, many of them could never have been effected at all. In a word, the reasons for establishing, not a Director-General, but a Minister, of National Education remain equally strong, whether or not an Educational Council be also established, and would become all the stronger, the greater the authority to be vested in such a Council. If there is to be educational centralisation, the ultimate control of it must surely rest with the nation itself.

But no difference of opinion as to the selection of means or agencies must be allowed to obscure our perception of the great end to be realised. To organise National Education in such a sense that no wheel in its mechanism shall fail to play

freely, and that none shall work to waste, that every endowed or State-aided school and college shall have a definite function assigned to it, that even private teachers shall be encouraged to feel themselves engaged in a public service as trainers of citizens, and that a new sentiment of intellectual sympathy among Englishmen shall call forth a new sentiment of national brotherhood in England, as it did in ancient Greece, and as it has in Germany—such appears to be the educational mission of this generation. Three centuries have elapsed since the Renaissance and the Reformation gave a more powerful impulse to National Education in this country than any which it has since received. The subsequent growth of the nation in numbers, in resources, in commercial enterprise, and in the range of its political responsibilities, has far outstripped its educational growth; and the vast disparity of educational training between class and class has assuredly concurred with other causes to produce the essentially modern separation of English society into 'horizontal layers,' corresponding too closely with degrees of wealth. There can be no solid national unity, if there is no community of ideas and culture between various sections of the nation. There can be no approach to social equality, where the difference of tastes, interests, and refinement is so great as it now is between gentlefolks and tradespeople—between the employers of labour and the wage-earning multitude. There is no power capable of checking the portentous advance of plutocracy in this age, except the power of aristocracy, as Plato conceived it—the aristocracy, not of parentage, but of education. He who shall have contributed, however feebly, in his day and generation to overcome the disuniting influences of caste and class-distinctions by the cementing influences of National Education, will not have lived or laboured in vain.





II

ENGLISH AND IRISH  
LAND-SYSTEMS



*THE LAST CHAPTER OF IRISH HISTORY.<sup>1</sup>*

THE last chapter of Irish History opens with the Irish Church Act of 1869, and the Irish Land Act of 1870. For nearly seventy years after the Union, Ireland had been governed by the Imperial Legislature with a sincere desire to promote the welfare of the people, but upon essentially English principles, and with little respect for Irish sentiment. Select Committees were appointed by the House of Commons in 1819 and in 1823, to inquire into the condition of the labouring poor in Ireland; and in 1825 a similar committee, appointed by the House of Lords, took valuable evidence on the relations between Irish landlords and tenants. Still, nothing practical was done to redress the abuses of Irish land tenure, and widespread distress prevailed, when the long period of comparative tranquillity which had succeeded the rebellion of 1798 was broken at last by the Clare election. The immediate consequence of this event, demonstrating the wonderful power of O'Connell, was the Emancipation Act of 1829. In the meantime, however, agrarian disturbances had been constantly rife, and the Habeas Corpus Act had been suspended for ten or eleven years out of twenty-nine. Roman Catholic Emancipation failed to produce the remedial effects which had been expected of it; distress, outrages, and coercion still followed each other in regular succession, and when Mr. Sharman Crawford introduced his first Tenant-right Bill in 1835, the state of the Irish peasantry was as hopeless as ever. It remained equally hopeless when the Report of the Devon Commission appeared, ten years later, containing the most

<sup>1</sup> This article was published after the rejection of Mr. Forster's Compensation for Disturbance Bill, and before the Report of Lord Bessborough's Commission.

exhaustive collection of information on the agrarian state of Ireland that has yet been laid before the public.

' It is needless to say that all the Bills founded on this Report proved no less abortive than Mr. Sharman Crawford's original Tenant-right Bill, and that no important reform of the Irish Land System was effected before the year 1870, with the single exception of Lord Cardwell's Act, passed in 1860. That Act has been persistently misrepresented as dictated by an exclusive partiality for the interests of landlords. In reality, while it declared the relation of landlord and tenant to be founded on contract, express or implied, and not on tenure, it contained several provisions in favour of tenants' interests. For instance, it gave every tenant a right to removable fixtures erected by himself, so long as they should not be erected contrary to any agreement, and disabled landlords from recovering by distress more than the rent of the last preceding year. But it did not grapple, or profess to grapple, with that insecurity of tenure which all impartial authorities, from Edmund Spenser downwards, had recognised as the master evil of the Irish Land System. Until 1870, it might truly be said that the Imperial Parliament, largely composed of landlords, had rejected every definite proposal for the abatement of this evil, and had apparently accepted the shallow aphorism attributed to Lord Palmerston, that tenant-right means landlord-wrong. On the other hand, it would be utterly unjust to describe the government of Ireland during the first sixty-eight years of the present century as oppressive, or to ignore the many beneficent and enlightened measures passed by the Imperial Parliament for the good of Ireland. By the National System of Education, the ultimate source of power, both moral and political, was brought within the reach of the people. By the Tithe Commutation Act, the worst grievances arising from the Church Establishment were abated. By the Poor Law, afterwards amended so as to make half the rates payable by landlords, an universal right to indoor relief was established, which saved the lives of myriads during the Great Famine. Had this right been extended to outdoor relief, half the nation

would have been on the rates; but the Evicted Tenantry Act of 1848, still in force, enabled temporary provision to be made for homeless paupers, without bringing them into the work-house. By various Acts, nearly twenty millions sterling was advanced for public works in Ireland, out of the Exchequer, and nearly one-third of this sum was remitted. By the Encumbered Estates Act, millions of acres were rescued from the hands of embarrassed and broken-down proprietors, to be placed in those of purchasers, mostly Irishmen, who, it was hoped, might become resident and improving landlords. There is no reason whatever to suppose that a native Parliament would have done more for the benefit of the country, and much reason to doubt whether it could have maintained the peace of the country. Nor must it be forgotten that for some years remedial legislation was arrested by the Repeal agitation, and the revolutionary movement of the Young Ireland party. But for such interruptions, checking the sympathy of Englishmen and Scotchmen with the distress of Irish peasants, the list of Irish reforms would assuredly have been longer, and the great measures of 1869 and 1870 would probably have been carried much earlier.

These measures have been described by Dr. W. N. Hancock, the eminent Irish statist, as 'surpassing in their benefits what the Roman Catholics would have gained under King William's Treaty of Limerick, if Parliament had carried out that treaty; or what Pitt would have conferred on Ireland after the Union, if King George III. had allowed him to fulfil his pledges.' The Parliament of 1868 had been elected upon a pledge of 'Justice to Ireland,' and manfully addressed itself to fulfil its task—not indeed 'according to Irish ideas,' but from an Irish point of view, and with a single-minded regard for Irish interests. It is the less necessary to dwell on the Irish Church Act, because it was tacitly accepted by Irish Catholics as a complete legislative surrender of Protestant ascendancy, and because Irish Protestants, while they absolutely condemned that surrender, have never disputed the liberality of the principles upon which the process of disendowment was con-

ducted. With a few slight exceptions, perfect religious equality may now be said to prevail in Ireland, and, if the Roman Catholics still labour under the constructive operation of one or two disabling statutes not yet repealed, they enjoy infinitely greater liberty than is allowed them in France or Germany. Upon the whole, the policy of the Church Act has been justified by success. It is true that it called forth quite as little gratitude as the Tithe Commutation Act, and was far less efficacious in securing the loyalty of the Roman Catholic priesthood than 'concurrent endowment,' without disestablishment, might probably have been. Still, it levelled the one standing trophy of English supremacy in Ireland, and the one visible apple of sectarian discord. Protestantism has suffered little by the withdrawal of State patronage, Catholicism has become somewhat less aggressive, and the mutual animosities of Irishmen turn somewhat less on religious antipathies than formerly. The results of the Land Act, on the contrary, must be profoundly disappointing to its authors. Nevertheless, it was prepared with the most elaborate care, after a thorough investigation of the problem to be solved, and a patient comparison of all the schemes that had been propounded for its solution during the twenty-five years since the appearance of the Devon Commission Report. The publications of Mr. Butt alone on 'Fixity of Tenure' are far more instructive and suggestive than all the speeches that have yet been made by the leaders of the present Land League, and the literary discussion that preceded the Land Act of 1870 was probably more voluminous, as it was certainly more worthy of preservation, than has been produced by the recent agitation. It may therefore be well to analyse briefly the main provisions of that measure, before proceeding to consider its operation, and the contemporary events of Irish history, during the last decade.

The Irish Land Act of 1870 was founded, in its conception, on a sound basis. Its framers clearly perceived that no mere reversal of the legal presumption applicable to improvements could satisfy either the equity or the exigency of

the case, since the mass of Irish tenant-farmers were not the creatures of contract at all, but the survival of an ancient and genuine, though disinherited, peasantry. They recognised the absurdity and the injustice of extending the Ulster custom, on the faith of which existing tenants had paid large sums of money, to provinces or districts in which existing tenants had taken farms without paying a penny. They deliberately rejected both the fixity of tenure, in the form of sixty-three-year leases, originally advocated by Mr. Butt, and the perpetuity of tenure for which he afterwards pleaded with equal versatility. Their efforts were directed, and wisely directed, to reconcile the rights of landlords with those of tenants, by giving the latter security of tenure without reducing the former to receivers of a fixed ground-rent, and by enabling willing tenants to purchase from willing landlords the fee-simple of their farms, upon favourable terms and reasonable conditions.

The first part of the Act, dealing with the occupation of *agricultural* land, recognised the existence of two agrarian constitutions in Ireland. It affirmed, for the first time, the validity of the Ulster tenant-right on all estates, whether in or out of Ulster, which could be proved to have been subject to it. The limits of the custom on each estate were left to judicial interpretation, so that 'office rules' fixing a *maximum* for the price of tenant-right would come as legitimately within the cognisance of the court as the tenant-right itself. But it permitted any tenant, at his own discretion, to forego his privileges under Ulster tenant-right and claim the rights granted to all Irish tenants outside its sphere. These rights were never laid down in the Act with logical precision, but were rather left to be inferred from the joint operation of its various clauses. It did not purport to overrule the established doctrine of English law, that land is the sole property of the landlord, and that no tenant, as distinct from a copyholder, has any proprietary interest in it whatever. Had it done so, it would have directly confiscated a part of the interests recently purchased in the Landed Estates Court, under the solemn guarantee of the State—not to speak of interests belonging to

hereditary owners. At the same time, it directly gave tenants what must be called a beneficial right of occupation, by imposing on the rightful owner a penalty for 'disturbance,' varying inversely with the value of the holding, in addition to all claims for improvements. Mr. Richey, in his admirable treatise on the Irish Land Laws, describes this provision as 'an enactment whereby the amusement of evicting tenants was made the monopoly of the wealthier proprietors.' It may equally be described as an enactment for encouraging the consolidation of farms upon the death of small tenants, for it is manifestly the interest of a landlord to escape the liability to compensation on the highest scale. Thus, whereas a tenant holding a farm under 10*l.* on the Government valuation may obtain a maximum of seven years' rent for disturbance, a tenant whose farm is valued above 100*l.* can obtain only one year's rent. By converting ten small farms into one large farm, a landlord may therefore reduce a liability of 700*l.* or upwards to little more than 100*l.*, with the further advantage of collecting his rent more easily.

It is superfluous to dwell on the minor checks and qualifications by which this part of the Act is fenced and guarded. But it is essential to notice several clauses by which the conflicting principle of contract was reimported into the new agrarian code. It was expressly provided that a lease for thirty-one years or upwards should defeat a tenant's claim to compensation for disturbance, though not his presumptive claim to compensation for improvements of a permanent character. Again, it was provided that any tenant, whose holdings were valued above 50*l.* a year, might contract himself out of the Act altogether, both as to compensation for disturbance and compensation for improvements. Under the so-called Equities Clause, which applies to Ulster also, the judge was empowered, in all cases, to entertain all considerations which can properly affect the assessment of damages, and especially the conduct of the tenant himself. Under other clauses, which do not apply to Ulster, non-payment of rent, or certain positive breaches of covenant, were made a conclusive bar to any



claim for disturbance, with an exception in favour of holdings valued at 15*l.* or under, if the court should deem the rent exorbitant. The scope of this clause, as originally proposed, was much wider. Even as limited by an amendment carried in the House of Lords, it introduced into the law of Ireland the pregnant idea of fixing rents by a Government valuation, and, so far, countenanced one article of the new charter proclaimed by the Land League.

The provisions designed to facilitate the creation of a peasant proprietary, and known generally as the 'Bright clauses' of the Land Act, embodied two distinct schemes. The one merely enabled the machinery of the Landed Estates Court to be employed by tenants contracting with their landlords for the purchase of the fee simple for their holdings. This scheme proved almost abortive, not only by reason of the difficulties always involved in selling estates under settlement, but also because the court seldom found it possible to sanction these arrangements between landlords and tenants without injury to incumbrancers or reversioners. The other scheme enabled the Board of Works to advance sums, not exceeding two-thirds of the whole purchase-money, to any tenant desiring to purchase his own holding on an estate put up for sale in the Landed Estates Court. This advance was to be repaid by an annuity, at the rate of 5 per cent., to continue for thirty-five years. The court was expressly empowered, indeed, to encourage such transactions by selling the estate in several lots, or otherwise, so far as might be consistent with the interests of the parties concerned; but few tenants availed themselves of the privilege. One explanation of this fact is that more liberal terms of pre-emption, in respect both of price and of advance, had already been offered by the Church Act to occupying tenants of glebe lands. But another explanation is assuredly to be found in the greater security of tenure guaranteed to Irish tenants by the Land Act itself, and in the hope of ulterior confiscation, sedulously propagated among them by popular agitators and the Nationalist press.

If we now review the policy and operation of the Irish

Land Act, calmly and dispassionately, by the light of ten years' experience, we cannot hesitate to pronounce it a failure politically, and a very partial success economically. While some recent writers, including Lord Sherbrooke, ignore it altogether, Mr. Barry O'Brien goes out of his way to avow his belief that it was never expected by its framers to be a final settlement of the Irish Land Question. This belief will be shared by no one conversant with the history of the measure; but all may now discern, what some discerned in 1870, that it contained in itself the seeds of inevitable miscarriage. The one grand rule which should have governed its construction was the necessity of drawing a broad and deep line between past and future claims. Considering the origin and growth of the Irish Land System, the long neglect of their primary duties by too many Irish landlords, the value added to the soil by the labour of Irish tenants, the predominance of custom over contract in the rural economy of Ireland, and the variety of equitable and imperfect rights which had sprung up out of all these circumstances, it was highly expedient, and no more than just, to award a liberal retrospective compensation for past claims of tenant-right. But it was a perilous, and has proved a ruinous, mistake to perpetuate the existence of such claims in the future. Three centuries ago Edmund Spenser recommended that a commission should be issued, 'to inquire throughout all Ireland, beginning with one county first and so resting till the same were settled, by the verdict of a sound and substantial jury, how every man holdeth his land, of whom, and by what tenure; so that every one should be admitted to show and exhibit what right he hath, or by what services he holdeth his land.' This suggestion, it is true, was not made in the interest of Irish tenants, but it was made with a distinct view to substituting a system of tenure by contract for that of tenure by status, and it would not be unworthy of consideration, even at this eleventh hour, if the object were to close accounts with the past and to make a new departure for the future upon the footing of contract. Unhappily, this object was not kept steadily before themselves by

the framers of the Irish Land Act. They desired, it is true, to encourage leases for thirty-one years; but they did not hold out to landlords or tenants adequate inducements for insisting upon leasehold tenure, or arm the courts with power to exert any effective pressure in this direction. By giving every tenant a claim to compensation for disturbance, they propped up the loose and unstable system of yearly tenancy, and created new facilities of borrowing, which have been grossly abused, and which have largely contributed to bring about the present crisis. By leaving the landlord an indefinite right of raising the rent, and by making non-payment of rent a bar to a tenant's claim (except in the case of very small holdings), they paved the way for an anti-rent crusade, which has already assumed most formidable proportions, and which Lord Beaconsfield deserves the credit of having very clearly predicted. By placing Ulster customs in a category by themselves, instead of bringing them within the control of a comprehensive law, they established a mischievous dualism, which has borne evil fruit, tempting either class of tenants to covet the rights without the correlative duties of the other class. In short, the intended settlement of Irish land tenure by the Act of 1870 has, in effect, left it more unsettled than ever. In spite of the assurances freely given by its promoters, it undermined, and could not but undermine, the ideas of property consecrated by the law of England, and theretofore respected, though not without protest, by the Irish peasantry. But it did not satisfy, and could not satisfy, the craving of the Irish peasantry for the undisturbed possession of their holdings, subject to a rent, if possible fixed, but at all events not variable at the discretion of their landlords. No gift of prophecy was needed to foresee that it would be followed by communistic demands for a more wholesale transfer of proprietary rights from Irish landlords to Irish tenants. But the precise form which these demands would take, and the rapid conversion of English minds to wild theories hitherto unknown to jurists or economists, could not have been foreseen, and may well startle foreign students of political life in England.

At first, however, and up to the early part of 1879, the practical result of the Irish Land Act was not wholly unsatisfactory. In the year 1872 a Select Committee was appointed by the House of Lords to investigate various charges which had been brought against the judicial administration of the new law. The Report of this Committee was, on the whole, favourable, and for a while it appeared that the Act had done little more than compel bad landlords to imitate the practice of good landlords. Under the influence of prosperous seasons rents had an upward tendency, and were regularly paid; land commanded as high a price in the market as before; and little was heard of complaints on the part of the tenants, except in Ulster, where the largest concessions to customary tenant-right had been made. Nevertheless, a profound, though unseen, change was really passing over the relations between Irish landlords and tenants, doubtless accelerated by the influence of the Ballot Act. Whatever remained of the old feudal land tenure had been ruthlessly swept away by the Act of 1860, which professed to establish absolute free trade in land, and, in a purely legal sense, the Act of 1870 was a partial relapse towards an older and less perfect type. But the Act of 1870, in a social and political sense, was a far more defeudalising measure than its predecessor. It utterly destroyed all sentiments of family allegiance or personal loyalty among Irish tenants, and absolved Irish landlords from all claims upon their sympathy and generosity. Though a tenant's position remained ostensibly the same until he was served by his landlord with a process of ejectment, and though no very great number of processes were actually served, the idea of ejectment has never thenceforward been absent from the mind of either, and the lawyer has been in constant requisition for private consultation at home as well as in the agent's office. Since their rights have been strictly confined and seriously curtailed by the Legislature, the landlords have not felt bound to abstain from exercising them, and tenants have seldom lost an opportunity of pushing their new powers to extremes, generally falling back on *ad misericordiam* appeals, when they

found the law against them. Money-lenders, of course, have done their best to utilise the qualified security of tenure granted by the Act, and credit has been given by shopkeepers and banks to farmers who, but for this, would have been unable to borrow a shilling. When the bad seasons of 1878 and 1879 impoverished the weakest members of this class, all their creditors, except their landlords, pressed for immediate payment, and, however great the forbearance of the landlord, he was denounced as a robber if he claimed more than a fraction of his rent. But in the five or six preceding years, the landlord's right to his full rent, which had been as vigorously maintained by Mr. Butt as it was emphatically reserved by the Act, seemed to be freely and honestly respected by the great body of Irish tenants.

Yet it cannot be said that, even during this comparatively hopeful interval, Ireland had rest from her ancient curse of agrarian and political conspiracy. A rapid glance at the chronicle of the decade, beginning with 1870, will suffice to dispel the illusion that redress of grievances, without coercion, produced contentment and peace among the Irish people. On the contrary, there is too much force in the remark of a contemporary writer, that 'the first effects of the stirring of the stagnant slough of Irish despond by the dredge of legislation had been to bring all the mud and refuse to the surface at once.' Fenianism had almost died out; but Lord Cairns, speaking in 1870, proved by statistics that agrarian outrages had suddenly increased to an alarming extent in 1869, the year of the Irish Church Act, including fifty-nine offences of the worst kind, and no less than eighteen assassinations. At the end of that year fresh troops were despatched to Ireland, and in the course of 1870 the country became more settled; but the improvement was not due to concession. In 1870 it was thought necessary to pass the Peace Preservation Act, and Mr. Fortescue, in proposing it on March 17, declared that agrarian crime had been more rife in Ireland during the preceding fourteen months than at any time since the year 1852. In the next year (1871), Parliament not only decided

to renew the Act for two years, but, on the recommendation of a very strong Committee, passed the far more stringent Westmeath Act, whereby the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended in that county and certain adjoining districts, for the same period of two years. The immediate consequence of this measure was the disappearance of several miscreants who had been the arch-directors of assassination, the summary arrest of a few others, and the collapse of terrorism. In 1872 Ireland was happy in the dulness of its annals, and its peaceable inhabitants breathed freely under the salutary protection of two Coercion Acts. In 1873 the agitation for 'Home Rule,' at first called 'Federalism,' began to grow more active; and both these Acts were again continued for two more years. As for the rejection of the Irish University Bill, which had so important an effect on English politics in that year, it was probably regarded by the Irish millions with as little concern as the failure of Sir C. O'Loughlen to obtain for Roman Catholics a complete relief from disabilities in respect of endowments, or the constitution of an Irish Local Government Board. Measures of this kind have a real interest for thoughtful and far-sighted men, and may ultimately come to be appreciated by the Ireland of the future. But no administrative reforms, except those which strengthen the hands of Government, can go far to pacify the Ireland of the present, and the political creed of an Irish peasant begins and ends with a passionate assertion of his agrarian rights.

After the General Election of 1874, Mr. Butt introduced his resolution in favour of Home Rule, and supported it with a speech in which he bluntly repudiated the obligation of political gratitude, alleging that Irish questions were never taken up by English statesmen except for the sake of party ends. Mr. Butt, however, was too sound a lawyer, and too much a Conservative at heart, to conduct a socialistic revolution. So long as the Home Rule Party remained under his guidance, its avowed aims were kept within safe limits; and even his Land Bill of 1876, though it reflected the more exorbitant demands of his followers, was not entirely incon-

sistent with the principles adopted in 1870. This moderation was fatal to his control over the Home Rule movement, as O'Connell's refusal to defy the law had been fatal to his control over the Young Ireland movement. In 1876 his ascendancy was rudely challenged by Mr. Smyth, an old Repealer, and two years later, after vain protests against the new tactics of Parliamentary Obstruction, he finally resigned the Home Rule leadership, and shortly afterwards died. Meanwhile events had marched rapidly, and Ireland presented a very different aspect after the General Election of 1880 from that which it had worn six years earlier.

Perhaps 1875 may be taken as the calmest year in this period, and the 'Times' correspondent was emboldened to state that never before had Ireland 'appeared more tranquil, more free from crime, more prosperous and contented.' Some naturally welcomed this happy condition as the fruit of remedial legislation; others surmised that it might be due to a belief that a Tory Government would not trifle with rebellion or anarchy. But it is at least significant that in this year the Peace Preservation Act was renewed, with some modifications, for a further term of five years, after a decisive speech from Lord Hartington, in which he pointed out that from two hundred to three hundred agrarian outrages had been perpetrated in each of the three preceding years. The Westmeath Act was renewed at the same time for two years. The experiment of governing Ireland without stringent measures of coercion had not been tried since 1869, and was not to be tried again until 1880. The year 1876 passed off quietly, but it is probable that the summary rejection of two Irish Bills for the reform of the parliamentary and municipal franchise, as well as of the Sunday Closing Bill, may have contributed to strengthen the extreme section of the Home Rule Party. At all events, in 1877, a system of organised obstruction was commenced in the House of Commons, with the acknowledged purpose of rendering the legislative union of Great Britain and Ireland intolerable. It was somewhat mitigated in the next session, until concessions on Inter-

mediate and University Education could be obtained from the late Government; but the irreconcilable spirit of which it was the expression broke out fiercely during the debate on Lord Leitrim's murder in 1878, and in 1879 the prevalence of agricultural distress in Mayo and Galway offered the agitators just such an opportunity as they desired. Though a Bill for the relief of distress in these and other parts was promptly introduced and passed, a grand anti-rent campaign was opened in the West by Messrs. Parnell and O'Connor Power during the month of June. From that moment appeals to the patriotism of Irish farmers have been almost superseded by undisguised appeals to their cupidity. The contagion of the new propaganda spread like wildfire; the Irish National Convention formed in the autumn was very soon forgotten; but all its most dangerous elements were absorbed into the Land League, and subscriptions were poured in from America to aid in delivering Ireland at once from landlordism and from English rule. The untiring efforts of Mr. Parnell and his colleagues made themselves powerfully felt in the General Election, and if the Home Rule Party here and there lost a seat, it soon appeared that its members were far better disciplined and far more obedient to political dictation.

Such was the state of Ireland when Mr. Gladstone assumed office with a majority so overwhelming as to make him independent of Irish support. He at once resolved to abandon all exceptional safeguards for the maintenance of law and order, to fall back on the common law, and to rely on remedial legislation alone for the pacification of the country. The Peace Preservation Act, which the late Government had been in no hurry to renew before the General Election, was allowed to expire, and it was announced on June 15 that a small Royal Commission would be appointed to inquire into the working of the Irish Land Act. But Mr. O'Connor Power had already introduced a bill to disable or deter landlords from evicting tenants or exacting exorbitant rents. He was induced to drop this bill on Mr. Forster's undertaking to deal with the alleged grievance of small tenants in Mayo, Galway, and elsewhere by



a clause to be inserted in a new bill for Relief of Distress in Ireland. On second thoughts he preferred to develop the promised clause into an independent bill, 'to make a temporary provision with respect to compensation for disturbance in certain cases of ejection for non-payment of rents in certain parts of Ireland.'

The history of this ill-starred measure is too fresh in the public memory to need more than a cursory recapitulation. In proposing it, Mr. Forster was careful to assure the House that it was not a concession to the anti-rent agitation, that it would operate only over a certain area, for no more than two seasons, and that it would mainly affect small tenants with no other means of living, of whose necessities, due to bad harvests, an unfair advantage might otherwise be taken. But no such assurances could avail to conceal the fact that it engrafted upon the law the germ of 'fixity of tenure' and 'fair rents,' and no one even moderately acquainted with Ireland believed for a moment that it would be possible to curtail in its influence within prescribed limits of space or time. The germ of 'free sale' afterwards found its way into the bill, in the form of an alternative clause, enabling the defaulting tenant to remain in possession, if the court should find that reasonable terms had been refused by the landlord, 'without the offer of any reasonable alternative.' After undergoing infinite modification and amendment in the course of debate, the bill passed the Commons, but was thrown out by a majority of 282 to 51 in the Lords. It is needless to add that much of the disorder that has since prevailed in Ireland has been attributed by the one party to its introduction, and by the other party to its rejection.

It is here right to notice an argument advanced in support of the bill, which seems to have had considerable weight in the Commons, but which is obviously founded on an unsound analogy. It was confidently asserted that, under the French law, losses arising from a wholesale failure of crops are to be shared between landlord and tenant, the inference being that in Ireland they ought not to fall exclusively on the latter.

But the fact is that, by the Code Napoléon, this rule is only applicable to yearly tenancies, and only takes effect when the whole, or at least half, of the crop is destroyed by causes beyond the farmer's control. In cases of tenancy for more than one year, it is expressly provided that extraordinary profits shall be set off against extraordinary losses, an account being taken of both at the expiration of the lease. Now, it has been well pointed out by Mr. Richey that the whole French law of landlord and tenant is founded on rigid and consistent principles of contract. 'It is the most complete and equitable application of the rules of free trade to the case of the letting and hiring of land.' Since the Irish Land Act of 1870, the Irish law of landlord and tenant has been founded on very different, if not on opposite, principles, the landlord alone being subjected to contract, while the tenant is given statutory rights of occupancy and compensation for improvements altogether outside his agreement. It would be a strange piece of legislation to borrow from the French law a provision which implies the absence of any tenant-right, and foist it upon an agrarian system in which tenant-right is fully recognised, even if this were done prospectively. But to indemnify against unexpected losses farmers who have obtained their holdings at a rent calculated to cover such risks, without taking account of unexpected gains, and to do this at the landlord's sole expense, would be an act of palpable injustice which no English economist would defend, if its true nature were understood.<sup>1</sup>

Another argument on which much stress was laid, was the general disposition of landlords to screw up rents progressively, for the very purpose of acquiring the right to evict, without compensation, for non-payment. No evidence was considered necessary to support this odious charge, for the verification or refutation of which we must await the Report of the Irish Land Commission. The judicial statistics

<sup>1</sup> Nor is this all. The French law expressly permits the parties to contract themselves out of its provisions, whereas the Irish tenant was to be protected against himself by compulsory legislation.

of 1879, however, furnish some valuable information on the actual number of 'ejectments served' and 'ejectments entered' on the books of the County Courts during that year. Hence it appears that, whereas 6,738 County Court ejectments were served in 1877 and 8,381 in 1878, 9,703 were served in 1879; and that in the ejectments entered there was an increase of 2,110 in 1879, following an increase of 1,559 in 1878, and of 320 in 1877. On the other hand, the number of cases actually tried under the Irish Land Act was considerably less in 1879 than in 1878, amounting to less than one in every 1,000 holdings on yearly tenancies. Moreover, the County Court 'ejectments executed,' though showing an increase of 34 per cent., as compared with those for 1878, did not exceed 2,670, or between one-third and one-fourth of the 'ejectments entered.' Almost the whole of the increase was due to ejectments for non-payment of rent, and, since the right to compensation for disturbance is generally forfeitable on non-payment of rent, unless under the Ulster custom, the aggregate amount of compensation awarded to tenants in Munster, Leinster, and Connaught was much smaller in 1879 than in the previous year. We also learn from the official returns that 'other creditors were no less importunate than those connected with land;' indeed, 'the number of civil bill decrees, or dismisses, unconnected with ejectments, executed by sheriffs or special bailiffs, increased from 21,678 in 1878, to 35,091 in 1879, or by 62 per cent.' This pressure from creditors bore heavily on the cottier-tenants, care-takers, servants, and herdsmen, in the rural districts, but 'there was also great pressure on the labouring-classes in the large and small towns; the warrants to special bailiffs against weekly tenants in towns having increased from 8,862 to 10,549, or 19 per cent.' The fair inference would seem to be that Irish landlords, who are generally the last creditors to be paid, were quite as forbearing as any other creditors. Some of them may have seized the opportunity, as in 1848, to clear their lands of unprofitable cottier-tenants, but the inquiries of Mr. Tuke and others do not bear out the impression that many were

guilty of so heartless a policy. There is, indeed, far more reason to believe that many well-to-do tenants accepted large abatements of rent from impoverished landlords, while they were themselves lodging considerable sums of money in the banks. Nevertheless, the Report of Dr. Hancock on the statistics of savings in Ireland shows an aggregate diminution of investments in the year ending June 30, 1880, as compared with the year ending June 30, 1879, to the extent of 838,000*l.* This diminution is chiefly due to a falling off of deposits and cash balances at Joint Stock Banks, the decrease of deposits in Trustees' Savings Banks being fully covered by an increase of those in Post Office Savings Banks.

Nearly five months have now elapsed since the Disturbance Bill was thrown out, and the state of Ireland during the whole of this period has been such as to recall the worst passages of her social history in the present century. No official record of the agrarian outrages committed throughout Ireland in 1880 has yet been published, but the charge of Mr. Justice Fitzgerald to the grand jury for the province of Munster, delivered on December 7, contains a deplorable catalogue of 'extraordinary offences' committed in that province alone, during the preceding four months. This catalogue does not profess to be exhaustive, and, so far as regards the county of Limerick, it represents only the returns for the preceding six weeks. Nevertheless, it includes two murders, sixty-nine cases of arson, and 287 cases of threatening letters, generally containing threats of murder, besides a long array of such cases as cattle-maiming, malicious injuries to property, firing into dwelling-houses, and forcible seizure of premises by armed parties. It is well known that December was the worst month of the whole year, and, when the full statistics are published, it will probably turn out to have produced more agrarian outrages than any month for at least a quarter of a century.

It is a very poor consolation to know that atrocities were even more numerous, and marked, if possible, by greater brutality, in the generation before the Great Famine, which is sometimes depicted as a Golden Age; that an average of

about 3,000 'extraordinary offences' were committed in all Ireland during a triennial period beginning with 1830, and that about eighty of these were homicides. Not only was Ireland then more populous, and its population far more wretched, but there was no Poor Law, and no popular grievance except the political disabilities of Catholics had then been redressed. Moreover, no mere enumeration of outrages can give the faintest conception of the anarchy which has lately ruled in Ireland. After the massacre of prisoners, Paris was tolerably quiet under the Commune, for the simple reason that no man dared to disobey its mandates—*Ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant*. A similar peace has been established in some parts of Ireland. Suits relating to land have almost ceased in some of the Civil Bill Courts, and the lawyers have actually been engaged in drawing up memorials to the Land League Committees which have usurped their place. Process-servers and bailiffs have been stoned, 'carded,' and otherwise maltreated, until process-serving has ceased; men, and women too, have been tortured for honestly paying their rents, until rents are paid by stealth, if at all, and sometimes returned by kindly landlords to save the tenant from the risk of further barbarities. Sheriffs have actually declined to execute ejectment writs, because the ejected tenant would at once be reinstated by force. Landlords and agents cannot stir out unless fully armed, and some are virtually captives in their own houses, where they hold themselves constantly ready for a murderous attack. All this is done with almost complete impunity. The culprits are seldom arrested and tried; they are hardly ever convicted. What Mr. Justice Fitzgerald said, 'in calm and measured language,' of Munster, is still more true of Connaught: 'In several districts, embracing a large portion of the province, true liberty has ceased to exist, and intolerable tyranny prevails. Life is not secure, right is disregarded, the process of the law cannot be enforced, and dishonesty and lawlessness disgrace the land.' In short, a perfect Reign of Terror has been established by the Land League, against which the Queen's Government appears to be

powerless, and because its laws are, in general, passively obeyed, we are invited, forsooth, to admire its comparative moderation in the distribution of its vengeance. - It is essentially a revival of Whiteboyism, but with an extended sphere of action; for the same practices are employed to settle family feuds, disputes between neighbours, and even the claims of importunate creditors. Not that lawful authority is ostensibly in abeyance. The police are hurried from one point to another; persons demanding protection are not refused it; and detachments of troops are sometimes employed to escort bodies of police or to patrol the Queen's highway. Magistrates are reminded by official circulars of all the powers which they possess in law, but are utterly unable to exert for want of evidence. Yet the emergency has not been deemed grave enough to call for exceptional measures of repression; and though Mr. Parnell and some of his colleagues are now at last on their trial for conspiracy, they have remained on bail for many weeks, out-heroding their former utterances by more and more violent declamations.

Such is the last page in the last chapter of Irish History, and it is one of which Englishmen, no less than Irishmen, have reason to be heartily ashamed. This is not the place to consider whether this agrarian rebellion might not have been averted by firm and wise counsels a few months ago; how Pitt, or Peel, or Palmerston would have dealt with it; or how far the difficulties of Mr. Gladstone in now dealing with it are aggravated by the imaginary necessity of conciliating an imaginary section of the Liberal Party, bent on crushing landlordism, as Strafford crushed liberty, in Ireland, the better to prosecute their designs against it in England. Statesmen have not to dispense retributive justice, but to mould national life out of existing facts. However iniquitous the means by which the Irish Land Question has again been forced upon the attention of Parliament, and whether or not the ignorant peasantry of Ireland have been wilfully hounded on to crime for this purpose, the duty of Parliament is simply to study the problem before it, and to devise, if it be

possible, a solution which may promote the permanent well-being of the country. To propose such a solution is beyond the scope of our present inquiry, but it may not be useless to indicate certain of the conditions upon the observance of which any scheme for an Irish land settlement must now depend for its success.

1. The first of these conditions is the prompt and determined restoration of order. It is certain that no other Government in Europe, and least of all that of the United States, would have tolerated for a month the state of things which has lasted and grown worse in Ireland ever since last August. If the Constitution did not give them power enough to put it down, the Executive would have asked the Legislature for increased power, or, if that involved too much delay, would have put it down by military force on their own responsibility, and fallen back on an Act of Indemnity. It may be that reasons will be given to justify the marvellous long-suffering of Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet, and that posterity will hereafter applaud their resolution to weather out the last months of 1880 without resort to a Coercion Act. But these reasons must be grounded on high State policy, and not on party exigencies; nor will the phrase 'coercion' impose on posterity as easily as it does on some living politicians. If the Irish nation were mainly composed of robbers and assassins, it might doubtless be treated as a national wrong, from an Irish point of view, to defend the minority against robbery and assassination. But if the Irish nation is mainly composed of peaceable citizens, without the moral courage to resist or denounce a few handfuls of robbers and assassins, who are thus enabled to intimidate whole counties, the national wrong consists rather in a persistent refusal of 'coercion.' It has never been alleged that a single innocent person was arrested under the Westmeath Act, and the incarceration of fourteen guilty persons for a limited period sufficed to rid the inhabitants of that region from the grinding tyranny of the Riband conspiracy under which they had so long groaned. To coerce the guilty is to protect the

innocent. It was said of old that Irishmen fear the Government no longer than they see it. What they now see is, that it is far safer to defy the law than it is to defy the Land League; and until they are convinced of the contrary, the stronger power will command their allegiance.

2. Order having been restored, the Irish Land Question must be reopened, but it will be worse than vain to consult Irish 'public opinion' upon the best method of solving it. It is not too much to say that no public opinion, worthy of the name, exists in Ireland, and that what passes for such is chiefly fabricated by a press which stands alone in Europe for scurrilous mendacity. For a trustworthy statement of the reasons for departing from the settlement of 1870, we must rely almost entirely on the forthcoming Report of the Irish Land Commission. When that Report has been duly weighed, it will soon be perceived that Ireland is no more an agricultural unit than England, and that a different solution of the Irish Land Question is required for different parts of the island. In the west of Connaught, most of the so-called tenants are essentially labourers, cultivating little plots on which they could not maintain families even if they were rent-free, and largely dependent on harvest-wages earned in England. To root these cottiers in the soil would be to prepare the ground for another famine. Though it may possibly be found that some further relaxation of the Poor Law might be safely allowed in their favour, and though room might be provided for some on reclaimable waste lands, common sense points to State-aided emigration as the one boon which Parliament can offer the surplus population. Again, in the rich grazing districts of Meath, in the eastern counties within the bounds of the old English Pale, or along some of the great river basins, little alteration of the present law is even desired by the farmers, as distinct from their self-constituted spokesmen. It is otherwise, no doubt, with the great mass of small tenants holding tillage farms, whether in Ulster or the other provinces, among whom the demand for the three F's is becoming as popular, and for the same reasons, as the



demand for partial repudiation would be popular among the needy taxpayers of a State burdened with a heavy national debt.

3. The real meaning of the 'three F's' is not apparent until their cumulative operation has been taken into account. 'Fixity of tenure' practically exists on thousands of Irish estates, and especially on those of great absentee noblemen, even to the extent of farms descending for generations in the same family. 'Fair rents,' as opposed to rack-rents, are not less the rule in Ireland than in England, where the competition among tenants is never so keen, but where no one ever disputes the application of supply and demand to agricultural tenancies. Nor is it by any means clear why an Irish farmer who objects to his rent as too high should not obtain compensation for his improvements under the Land Act, and take one of the many vacant farms in England, which are now to be had at something far below a 'fair rent.' 'Free sale' is already recognised in Ulster, subject only to the landlord's veto, and no rational advocate of Ulster tenant-right has seriously proposed to dispense with that veto. But the cumulative operation of the three F's in the sense now formulated by Irish land-reformers would be flagrant confiscation. Absolute fixity of tenure, combined with absolute freedom of sale, would mean that no landlord could get rid of his tenant, but that any tenant could get rid of his landlord, and substitute for himself a man of straw. An official regulation of rents, combined with freedom of sale, would mean that a landlord must not get a competition rent for a farm, but that a tenant may sell his interest to the highest bidder, though he may have been admitted the year before without paying a penny, and may pocket in this way all the capital which his successor requires to work the land. It is needless to follow out these consequences further, since it must be evident that a landlord whose tenants held under the three F's would cease to be a landlord at all. But an official regulation of rents, taken by itself, is open to no such fatal objections, though its logical corollary would be a State guarantee of the rents thus fixed. It may conflict with economical doctrines generally received

in England, and would be quite out of place in a more advanced country than Ireland; but it would probably be welcomed by a majority of Irish landlords, and produce a more stable equilibrium in agrarian relations than has resulted from the natural play of supply and demand.

4. It must always be remembered that Irish landlords are not only a much smaller body, in proportion to farmers, than English landlords, but are also to a very great extent a non-resident body. Lists of Irish absentees are no longer published, as they sometimes were in the last century, but the small attendance of county magistrates at petty sessions is a very strong proof either of their non-residence or of their indifference to public duty. The judicial statistics for 1879 show that on no less than 2,099 occasions only one local magistrate attended petty sessions; and that on 768 occasions the petty sessions could not be held for want of even one magistrate. Indeed, the Duke of Marlborough called the special attention of Irish lord-lieutenants to this subject by a circular of last year. Now, the *raison d'être* of landlordism is residence. An invisible landlord, who neither improves his own estate, nor shows a personal interest in his tenants and labourers, nor attends to local and county business, is not a landlord who would be greatly missed. Probably it is just such a landlord who, if fair terms were offered, would be most willing to be 'bought out;' while the more active members of the landlord class might prefer to retain their properties, subject to an official regulation of rents. Nor would the process of buying out landlords involve of necessity the substitution of the State in that capacity. It is not impossible to imagine a land-settlement more or less resembling that made in Russia, under which counties or baronies should be empowered to replace the expropriated landlords and levy a land-tax in the nature of rent. If a scheme of this kind should take effect, it might perhaps be found that most of the working bees would be retained in the hive, and that a gradual migration of the drones would come about without violence or injustice. Such a transition from landlordism to farmer-proprietorship would be far

gentler, and attended by much less of social change, in Ireland than in England, for Irish farmers are already their own masters, for all social purposes, and the civilising influence of country gentlemen with their families is little felt in the great majority of Irish parishes. At the same time, if this or any similar principle be adopted for the solution of the Irish Land Question, grave difficulties will inevitably remain—the difficulty of guarding against the revival of landlordism in a worse form under money-lenders and middlemen, the difficulty of checking subdivision and consequent over-population, the difficulty of erecting the existing tenantry into a privileged caste without permanently divorcing the labourers from the soil, and condemning them to hopeless degradation. These difficulties may be ignored by unscrupulous demagogues, but they must be overcome by Parliament, and they cannot be overcome in the spirit of class-legislation. The rules of political economy may be variable, but the laws of justice are eternal. If these laws be not maintained in the coming Land Bill, it will but usher in a new cycle of agrarian discontent and disturbance, instead of enlisting the one great middle class of the Irish people on the side of order, and forming the prelude to a brighter chapter of Irish History.

*THE LAND SYSTEMS OF ENGLAND  
AND OF IRELAND<sup>1</sup>*

An Address delivered at the Royal Institution of Great Britain, on  
Friday, May 6, 1881.

I HAVE undertaken to address you to-night on the land systems of England and of Ireland, that is, on the distinctive and typical features which characterise them among the land systems of the world. Such a study is especially interesting at the present moment, when radical changes in the Irish land system are actually under the consideration of Parliament, and the English land system itself may be said to be on its trial. But the rules of this Institution do not permit me to discuss English or Irish land questions in the political or controversial sense. We are mainly concerned to-night with the past and present aspects of the English and Irish land systems; the future development of those land systems rests with the Legislature, and the members of this Institution have little reason to envy their responsibility.

I. The land systems of England and of Ireland have a common historical origin. Modern researches have shown that in both countries the earliest form of agrarian constitution was a tribal settlement, or village community, representing a clan or group of kindred families. It is needless here to dwell upon the peculiar and minute rules which governed the division and cultivation of land in this primitive society, which are still preserved in the so-called 'Brehon Laws' of Ireland. What is important to note is that it left no room for that threefold division of burdens and profits between landlords, tenant-farmers, and farm labourers, which is the special mark

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gladstone's Land Bill of 1881 had been introduced shortly before.

of the English rural economy. Every freeman was, in theory, his own landlord, his own farmer, and his own labourer, and, except serfs or slaves, there were very few persons who did not form members of the landed democracy, as it might be properly called. But the landowners of that day were not peasant proprietors, for though each was entitled to a lot of his own, he could not be sure of holding the same piece of ground two years together; and there were few, if any, separate enclosures for cattle. By slow degrees, however, the principle of individual ownership asserted itself. The chief, or strongest member, of a clan would obtain larger allotments than others, and at last get them severed from the common fields; at the same time he would claim the lion's share of the waste, and at last came to treat it as his own property, only subject to rights of pasturage and turf-cutting. Meanwhile, other causes were at work to undermine the landed democracy, and transform it into a landed aristocracy, under which the village community became the manor, the greater freeholders became tenants, and the lesser freeholders sank into the class of villeins or mere labourers. We must not stop to investigate the steps by which this remarkable transition was effected. Suffice it to say, that it seems to have been completely effected in most parts of England before the Norman Conquest, and had been partially, if not completely, effected in Ireland, when it passed under the rule of Henry II. a century later.

During the Middle Ages, the land systems of both countries were profoundly modified by the introduction of feudal tenures. Not that feudal tenures, with all their well-known incidents, were substituted all at once for the old national customs by a single act of the sovereign power. Even in England more than a century elapsed before feudalism was fully established, and even then it was subject to important exceptions in Kent and elsewhere. As for Ireland, the greater part of the island remained outside the dominion of English law until the reign of Henry VIII. For some little time after the Conquest, an attempt was made to extend the new institution of judicial assizes over the whole country, and Magna Charta was proclaimed

there as promptly as if Ireland had already formed part of an United Kingdom. But, in fact, both English law and English authority were confined within the boundaries of a few counties, thence called the English Pale. These counties at last dwindled down to four, and even here the old Irish customs of land tenure, as well as the old Irish manners, had encroached more and more upon English customs and land tenures. The King of England was not king, but only 'Lord,' of Ireland; but one English army (under Richard II.) crossed the Irish Channel in the course of three or four centuries; and we know from the works of Edmund Spenser and Sir John Davies, that all the strange anomalies of tribal ownership survived in vast tracts of Ireland up to the end of Elizabeth's reign, and the beginning of James I.'s reign.

Still, the feudal system is the real basis of the English and Irish land laws, as they exist at this moment. I must assume that my audience is sufficiently acquainted with the broad outlines of that system, which ceased to govern the whole structure of society after the Reformation, but which continued to regulate the land tenures of most European countries until after the French Revolution. In England, it is true, it was otherwise. 'Feudal tenures,' in the strict legal sense, were abolished here in the reign of Charles II., but, perhaps for that very reason, the principles and rules of feudal law escaped revision here, when they were swept away elsewhere, and have left an indelible stamp on the distinctive features of the Anglo-Irish land system.

II. These features are five in number:—(1) The law and custom of Primogeniture, governing the descent and ownership of land. (2) The peculiar nature of family settlements, which convert the nominal owner of land into a tenant for life, with very limited powers over the estate. (3) The consequent distribution of landed property among a comparatively small and constantly decreasing number of families. (4) The direction of cultivation by a class of tenant-farmers, usually holding from year to year without the security of a lease. And (5) the dependent condition of the agricultural labourers, who

are mostly hired by the day or the week, and have seldom any interest in the soil. It is the combination of these features which makes the rural economy of England so entirely unique, unlike that of any other European country, and still more unlike that of the United States or our own colonies. They are often represented as the spontaneous growth of our national character and history, coupled with the peculiarities of our soil and climate. I think I shall be able to show that such is not the fact—that, in reality, they are mainly the result of artificial causes, and that it is quite within the province and the power of law to remodel—of course gradually—the land systems of England and of Ireland.

1. Let us first glance at the institution of Primogeniture. The right of the eldest son to inherit all the land, in case of intestacy, was not recognised by Roman law, or by any of the primitive codes known to us, such as those of the ancient Hindoos, the ancient Germans, the Irish, or the Anglo-Saxon. The Saxon rule of descent, as is well known, was that of gavelkind, or equal division; nor was it superseded by the Norman rule of Primogeniture until about the year 1200. It has often been observed that under a charter of Henry I., which seems to have continued in force only five years, the eldest son did not succeed to all his father's land, but only to his 'principal fee,' or the chief of several estates. A very similar rule still prevails in the Channel Islands, which are virtually a fragment of that Normandy from which England was conquered. This was, in fact, the old Norman law, and it was only for military reasons that William the Conqueror and his successors adopted the strict and absolute law of Primogeniture which has now been firmly established in England for nearly seven centuries. After a careful study of the subject, I am convinced that it is this law of Primogeniture which has produced and kept alive the custom, and that it is not the custom which has perpetuated the law. Before the law was introduced in England, there is no reason to believe that any general custom of Primogeniture existed in English families. After the law was swept away in America,

an equal partition of land became the almost universal custom, although American testators enjoy almost the same liberty of making wills that is allowed in England. Moreover, in the case of personal property, where the law is different in England, the custom is also different, and hardly anyone thinks of accumulating all his personalty on one son. Nor must we suppose that because the law seldom operates directly, it has not a very wide and powerful operation indirectly. When a man makes a will, or settlement, he knows very well, or, if he does not, his solicitor tells him, that all his land would naturally go by law to his eldest son, and this knowledge, transmitted from one generation to another for seven hundred years, creates a sentiment or prejudice in favour of Primogeniture which nothing but a reversal of the law will effectually counteract. No doubt there is much to be said for, as well as against, Primogeniture; but for our present purpose the important fact is that Primogeniture, founded on law and consecrated by custom, is the chief corner-stone of the English land system.

2. But the custom of Primogeniture is far more stringent than the law. When land descends to an eldest son, on intestacy, it belongs to him absolutely, and he is free to deal with it as he pleases. On the other hand, when it comes to him under a will or a settlement, it usually comes to him for life only, and must afterwards go to his eldest son, whether he pleases or not. This is the consequence of certain legal refinements devised in the seventeenth century, whereby it is possible for a grandfather to ordain beforehand that his eldest grandson, as yet unborn, and who may turn out the most worthless or the most exemplary of mankind, shall inherit a particular estate, making his son only a life tenant or 'limited owner.' Under the older entails of the Middle Ages this was impossible, and though similar powers of tying up land were acquired by the landed aristocracy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, means were found to defeat them, so that in the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth centuries the ownership of land was far more free than



it now is. At present, the great mass of land in this country is under settlement, and land under settlement is land which has not, and perhaps never may have, a real owner. The apparent owner of a great family estate is nothing but a trustee, and though of late something has been done to give him more liberty of action, he is hampered at every turn by the necessity of obtaining consents from a number of different parties, or perhaps from the Court of Chancery. Suppose all these consents to be obtained, he may doubtless improve or even sell the property; but what motive has he to do so, when he cannot reap the fruit of the improvements or become master of the purchase money? Indeed, the evils of limited ownership are so obvious, especially from an economical point of view, that no one would venture to defend it, but that it is supposed to keep old family properties from being broken up. But then the question arises whether this is altogether an advantage. The character of the English gentry and aristocracy was formed before limited ownership was known, and when estates descended from father to son either in fee simple, or under the old rule of entail, which allowed of their being instantly converted into fee simple estates. In those days, family properties were placed under the guardianship, not of conveyancers, but of the families themselves, and the nation was content that if they came into the possession of degenerate heirs they should be sold and purchased by worthier competitors. Even now such cases occur, where a family property is ruined by one or two spendthrift limited owners in succession. Experience amply shows that, in such cases, it generally changes hands for the better, notwithstanding the loss of ancestral connection. The new purchaser may be comparatively ignorant of country life, but he is not encumbered by rent-charges of indefinite duration, by mortgages contracted to pay off his father's debts, by dynastic traditions of estate-management, by the silly family pride which must needs emulate the state of some richer predecessor, by the passion for political dictation to which the refusal of leases is so frequently due, or by the supposed necessity of satis-

fyng the supposed expectations of the neighbourhood. He can provide for his widow and younger children by selling off portions of the property, if he pleases, instead of charging the estate, and in the meantime he can develop the resources of the property, without feeling that he is either compromising or unjustly enriching an eldest son. These advantages make themselves felt even when the new purchaser is surrounded with great settled estates and influenced by the example of their possessors. But they might be expected to make themselves far more conspicuously felt if all landowners enjoyed the same freedom of disposition.

3. The inevitable tendency of a land system thus founded on Primogeniture, and guarded by family settlements, is to prevent the dispersion of land, and to promote its concentration in a few hands. Settled estates seldom come into the market, and, when they do, the money has generally to be reinvested in land; but there is nothing to prevent a rich life-tenant from increasing the size of his property, and this is constantly happening. A very large number of farmhouses in England are really ancient manor houses, formerly the residence of squires and yeomen, whose little freeholds have been gradually absorbed into the princely territories of the landed aristocracy, and whose descendants are settled in the neighbouring towns. Of course, we must not forget the opposite movement, or counter-migration of retired tradespeople into the country; but they seldom take root there; they do not look upon their villas as homes, they count for nothing in a county, and their children are usually reabsorbed into the town population.

Upon the whole, it may be stated with certainty that the number of agricultural landowners in England was never so small, as the population was never so large, as it now is. It would appear from 'Domesday Book' that in the reign of William the Conqueror the soil of England was divided among about 170,000 landowners, including more than 100,000 villeins, as well as above 50,000 freeholders. There is no direct mode of estimating the number of landowners between that

age and our own, but there is a vast body of indirect evidence pointing to the conclusion that in the reign of Elizabeth, for instance, petty squires, yeomen, and small freeholders occupied a much larger space in the community than they do at present. Even since the compilation of the 'New Domesday Book,' in 1876, there is great difficulty in ascertaining the exact actual number of English landowners; but, after devoting much attention to the subject, with the able assistance of Mr. John Bateman, I have arrived at an approximate result. I believe that, excluding the holders of less than one acre, there are now about 150,000 landowners in England and Wales, while about 2,250 persons own together nearly half the enclosed land in England and Wales. Considering that England and Wales now contain a population of more than 20,000,000, and did not contain above 2,000,000 in the reign of William the Conqueror, the proportion of landowners to population is now less than one-tenth of what it then was, and, what is still more striking, nearly half of all the land belongs to a mere fraction—about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.—of all the existing landowners, even excluding those below one acre.

It would be superfluous to point out the political danger involved in this distribution of landed property, which contrasts most strongly with that which exists in foreign countries. For instance, in France, before the loss of Alsace and Lorraine, there were about 5,000,000 proprietors owning about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  acres each, on the average; about 500,000 proprietors, owning 75 acres each, on the average; and about 50,000 proprietors, owning 750 acres each, on the average. In Würtemberg, there are some 280,000 peasant owners, with less than five acres each, and about 160,000 proprietors of estates above five acres. No doubt, this extreme subdivision is, to a great extent, the result of the Code Napoléon, under which at the death of a proprietor all his land is divided equally among his children, except one child's portion, which is left at his own disposal. On the other hand, the extreme aggregation of land in England is no less the result, and the

foreseen result, of Primogeniture and settlement. It is not merely that, under the law of Primogeniture, a great estate which may have been formed out of many small estates goes to one child, instead of being subdivided among several; nor is it only that settlements prevent family estates from being diminished, while they do not prevent them being increased. It is also that Primogeniture and family settlements have created a landed aristocracy under the cold shadow of which a true yeomanry, like the old English, cannot flourish. It is too much to say that the old yeomen have been *crushed out* by powerful neighbours. Many have sold their patrimonies because they were in debt, or because they found that by getting a fancy price from some great nobleman or millionaire they could improve their incomes and the expectations of their families. But it is still more delusive to regard the disappearance of the old English yeomanry as the result of natural causes beyond the control of law. When it is said that land in this country has now become the luxury of the rich, and that a poor man would be very foolish to retain a few hundred acres when he could make a profit by selling them, it is forgotten that in Northern France, Belgium, Holland, and elsewhere, land fetches a higher price than in England, but that small proprietors do *not* die out; on the contrary, that they are the highest bidders in the land-market. We must, therefore, look beyond the fancy price of land for the explanation of the fact that in England the body of landowners is getting smaller and smaller. The explanation is not far to seek. The vast preponderance of great landowners has left the yeoman class no place in county government or county society. As one yeoman vanishes after another, those who survive, feeling themselves more and more isolated, and missing the neighbourly fellowship of past generations, are drawn insensibly into country towns, until at last the rural population of English counties may be said to consist of three elements, and three only, landlords, tenant-farmers, and labourers.

4. This leads us to consider the fourth distinctive feature

of the English land system—the direction of cultivation by a class of tenant-farmers usually holding from year to year, without the security of a lease. For the great bulk of the land in these islands, as is well known, is cultivated, not by the owners, but by this intermediate class, numbering between 500,000 and 600,000 farmers in Great Britain, who hold on the average 56 acres each. It is not thus in other countries, especially in the most civilised. There, on the contrary, the great bulk of the land is cultivated by the owners themselves, most of whom may be classed with our agricultural labourers rather than with our tenant-farmers, but form a real peasantry of a class well nigh extinct in England. For it was not always thus in England itself. Lord Macaulay believes the small freeholders, whom he estimates at 160,000, to have greatly outnumbered the tenant-farmers in the reign of Charles II., and there is good reason to believe that English farms were commonly held under lease until the period of the French war at the end of the last century. The history of yearly tenancy is difficult to trace, but it is certain that it was very much encouraged by the long continuance of ‘war prices’ which made landlords very unwilling to part with the immediate control of their properties, and by their desire to maintain political influence over their tenants. The late agricultural depression has operated in the same direction, inclining landlords to keep farms at their disposal until rents improve, and inclining tenants to rely on the forbearance of landlords under yearly tenancy, rather than ‘hang a lease round their necks,’ as they say. On the other hand, the want of security incident to a mere yearly tenancy, and especially the want of security for a farmer’s improvements, have been very much felt and discussed of late. Unhappily, it has not led to a revival of leases, but to attempts to bolster up the unstable system of yearly tenancy. One of these attempts was embodied in the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1875, to extend which is the object of two Bills introduced this year. Such measures may be described as tending to establish a national system of tenant-right, and this would certainly be a great advance on

mere yearly tenancy, but it would be a very poor substitute for leases, and no substitute at all for ownership.

5. We now come to the fifth distinctive feature of the English land system—the dependent condition of the agricultural labourer. During the Middle Ages, English labourers, whether freemen or serfs, had always been essentially *peasants*, that is, occupiers of land which they cultivated in spare hours for their own benefit, and from which they could not be displaced, so long as they rendered certain customary services or paid their rent. With the growth of the commercial spirit, the suppression of monasteries, the general rise of prices, and the progress of enclosure, a new era set in, and the poor-law of Elizabeth finally transformed the old English peasant into the modern English agricultural labourer, who lives on weekly wages, never owns land, and seldom holds any beyond a small garden or allotment, looking upon the workhouse as his natural refuge in old age. Probably he is better housed and clothed than his mediæval ancestor, though it is doubtful whether he is better fed, if we take into account the exorbitant price of meat in these days. But he is certainly less independent, and, notwithstanding the spread of education, he must still be ranked below a great part of the Continental peasantry—not to speak of American farmers—in the scale of civilisation.

III. Let us now consider how far these distinctive features of the English land system apply to Ireland.

1, 2. Of course, the law of succession to land and the practice of family settlements are the same in both countries, though Primogeniture was not established in the Celtic parts of Ireland until after the great confiscations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Even now, it is not so deeply rooted in Irish as in English popular sentiment. The yeomen and small proprietors who still survive in some English counties generally 'make eldest sons,' but Irish tenant-farmers, who have long been wont to deal with their farms as if they were their own, often leave them by will to their widows, and usually make a liberal provision out of them for younger sons and daughters.

3. But, however this may be, the landowning class, under the operation of Primogeniture and entail, has become even smaller in Ireland than in England—smaller, not only absolutely, but relatively. Speaking broadly, we may say that all Ireland is divided among about 20,000 proprietors, and that by far the greater part is owned by about 10,000 proprietors, of whom most are Protestant and of English descent, while many of the largest are absentees. This contrast between 20,000 or 10,000 owners and more than half a million occupiers, must never be forgotten in a survey of Irish rural economy. It is of course partly the result of conquest and confiscation—great tracts of land having been allotted to any soldier or adventurer willing to settle in the country. It partly arises also from the want of trade and manufactures in Ireland, which reduces the number of people able and willing to purchase land, for the purpose of improving their social position. But there can be no doubt that it mainly arises from the operation of Primogeniture and entail, keeping the ownership of Irish land in the hands of men unconnected with Ireland, many of whom, if free trade in land had been established, would have sold their estates long ago to the occupying tenants. This has actually been done under the Irish Church Act, and to a less extent under the Irish Land Act of 1870, which have added about 5,000 to the number of small Irish proprietors. Probably more occupiers would have availed themselves of the facilities granted by these Acts, if they had not been taught by agitators that, by waiting a little while, they would get the land for nothing.

4. But the greatest distinction between the Irish and English land system is in the relation between landlord and tenant,—partly in the laws which regulate it, but mainly in the customs and ideas which influence it. Let us briefly notice some of the circumstances which have brought about this great difference in customs and ideas.

The greater part of Ireland never adopted feudal institutions as a whole, and, where they were adopted, the feudal lord was not the friend and protector of his tenant, as in Eng-

land, but was constantly regarded as an alien intruder. Again, though the feudal law of landlord and tenant was ultimately established in Ireland, it was more favourable to the landlord and less favourable to the tenant, than in England. Nevertheless, for two centuries and a half after the English poor-law was established, there was no poor-law in Ireland, so that small tenants naturally held on to the land for bare life, having no other means of subsistence.

Meanwhile the respect for property, that is, for the landlord's rights, as distinct from the tenant's, was very much weakened by the differences of religion, and by the demoralising effect of the penal laws. It was further weakened by the fact that so many Irish landlords entirely neglected their duties, and left all improvements, including the erection of farm buildings, to be executed by their tenants, while they contented themselves with receiving their rents. Of course, the case was aggravated where the landlord, as often happened, was an absentee. No liberality on the part of an agent can supply the want of that kindly intercourse between the hall and the cottage, which binds classes together in an English village, but of which Irish farmers and labourers have little experience. No wonder that Irish tenants should thus grow up in the belief that the soil was theirs, and the rent only the landlord's.

We cannot do justice to the agrarian movement in Ireland, or appreciate the deeper causes to which it owes its origin, without placing ourselves in the position of a representative Irish tenant *before the Act of 1870*, and striving to interpret the feelings which underlay his fierce hatred of landlordism, a hatred which even the remedial legislation of that year has failed to appease. We shall afterwards be far better able to appreciate the still more sweeping reforms which are now in contemplation.

The representative Irish tenant is not a capitalist farmer at all, in the English sense, but rather a cottager holding some fifteen or twenty acres of land, including several acres of rough pasturage for the cows, of which the poorest Irish family



generally manages to keep one or two, with very humble pretension to breed, yet frequently yielding a large supply of milk. He was born upon the land which he cultivates, if not in the cabin which he inhabits. Sometimes the little farm lies compactly round its steading; more often it is scattered about in irregular patches, or stretches in a long narrow strip from a hillside down towards a stream or marshy bottom. It is tilled by the farmer himself, with the aid of his sons or nephews, and occasionally of an obliging neighbour, but, in most cases, without recourse to hired labour. Perhaps his ancestors, in far-off times, were entered on the sept-roll as possessors of this very plot, which has been tenanted ever since by his family, though repeated confiscations may have effaced the memory of its superior lords before the last century, and its last purchaser may have acquired it under a sale in the Encumbered Estates Court. Perhaps it was painfully won from the adjoining waste by his father or himself, either in the capacity of a mere squatter, or under a verbal arrangement with the agent that no rent should be exacted for a certain number of years. However this may be, and whether its present occupant inherited it or reclaimed it by his own industry, all that has made it a *home* for him was created by himself or his kindred, nor is it possible for him to regard it as the sole property of a stranger. Every piece of stonework upon it, from the rude homestead to the meanest shed or byre, was erected by himself or his forefathers, every fence or enclosure was made by them, every field cleared and roughly drained by them, nor is there any visible sign of proprietorship other than his own, unless it be the occasional presence of an agent who is chiefly known to him as a collector of rent. His rent is not high, it is true, being little above the Government valuation, and far less than some insolvent and reckless neighbour would undertake to pay if the farm were put up for competition. His landlord, too, is a kind-hearted man, in his way, never raising a tenant's rent twice in one lifetime, and willing to make abatements in hard seasons, but seldom resident, and cut off from his sympathy by the iron barriers of race and religion.

The genial influence of a good English squire, who devotes himself to county business, takes an interest in the parish school, directs his own improvements, and visits his labourers' cottages, is something of which he cannot even conceive. No one ever threatened him with eviction, or informed him directly that in such a case he must not look for compensation. The idea of eviction and its consequences, however, is always present to his mind. He remembers that, after the great famine, scores of little cabins disappeared from the mountain-side opposite, and that nothing was ever heard again of their former inmates. It has been reported to him that in the next county vast grazing-farms have been formed out of holdings like his own, and that the experiment has been financially successful. He read only the other day a paragraph in the newspapers advertising for sale just such an estate as his landlord's, and describing it as greatly under-rented and suitable for pasture. He is aware, indeed, that here and there a good landlord, compelled to part with a portion of his property, has granted leases beforehand to old tenants, and thereby protected their equitable rights against the purchaser. But he believes such magnanimity to be very rare, and dares not count upon it himself, especially as he is told that since tenant-right has come to mean downright confiscation, proprietors must get their estates so far as possible into their own hands. He lives, therefore, from hand to mouth, as his fathers lived before him, tilling no more land than he can till with one horse and without machinery, never laying out a penny that he can help, studiously keeping up the appearance of poverty, and hoarding the little profits of his scanty crops and butter in an old stocking, till he can lodge them clandestinely in a bank, not too near, for the marriage portions of his daughters. It is vain to assure him that he may safely rely on the honour of an individual who may die to-morrow, or sell to a Dublin speculator, or be driven into a system of rack-renting by the pressure of his creditors. Why, he asks, should not the law secure to me an indefeasible right of possession, so long as I pay a fair rent, if this is what I may

fairly expect from my landlord's sense of justice? Why should I be left absolutely at his mercy, and my children at the mercy of those who may succeed him, if it be admitted that it would be an abuse of power to confiscate my improvements, or even to disturb my occupancy? <sup>1</sup>

Such was the actual position of a representative Irish tenant before the Act of 1870, and such, in spite of the Act, is still the *sentiment* of a representative Irish tenant. For while the Act placed a heavy penalty on 'disturbance,' it laid no effectual restriction on the increase of rent. Moreover, as we are reminded, in the Report of Lord Bessborough's Commission, 'what the aggrieved tenant wants, in nearly all cases, is not to be compensated for the loss of his farm, but to be continued in its occupancy at a fair rent.'

5. The case of the Irish labourer has received less attention than it deserves. He is somewhat roughly defined, in the Report of Lord Bessborough's Commission, as 'a farmer who is without a farm.' In other words, there is hardly such a thing in Ireland as an independent class of agricultural labourers. Most of those so described in the Census are small farmers working in spare hours, or sons of tenant-farmers, or perhaps men who have been turned out of farms for non-payment of rent. In the west of Ireland, however, and especially in Connaught, there are thousands of cottier-tenants living on patches of land incapable of supporting a family, even if they were held rent-free, who eke out a livelihood by going over to England or Scotland for harvest, and returning with their wages, on which they mainly subsist during the winter. The misery of these poor creatures who returned empty-handed after the bad harvests of 1878 and 1879, only to find their own potato crops destroyed by the blight, was among the main causes of the late agrarian agitation in Ireland. The leaders of the Land League seized eagerly upon it, and the crusade

<sup>1</sup> This description of the Irish farmer has been extracted, with little variation, from an Essay on the Irish Land Question in 1870, published in Brodriek's *Political Studies*, 1879.

against rent, first preached in the wilds of Connemara, rapidly spread over all Ireland.

In picturing to ourselves the lot of these cottiers, it is material to observe that, as the poor-law is more strictly administered in Ireland, they do not enjoy the same privilege of receiving outdoor relief as in most English counties. Now, although a 'liberal' system of outdoor relief is a very doubtful boon to labourers, since it tends to pauperise them and reduce the rate of wages, the refusal of outdoor relief is specially hard to bear where regular wages are not always to be procured. The old English poor-law was virtually a compensation for those changes which had depressed the English peasant of the Middle Ages into a mere day-labourer. But for the poor-law, socialistic ideas would have propagated themselves long ago in the rural districts of England; and in Ireland, where poor-law relief is only given to able-bodied men in the workhouse, such ideas have actually propagated themselves with fearful rapidity. For the evicted cottier in Ireland can seldom find work in towns; his only resource, except the workhouse, is emigration—which he considers banishment—to England or the United States.

IV. We have now passed in review, however briefly, the distinctive and typical features of the English and Irish land systems. I have said that we are not specially concerned with their future development, but I cannot forbear to add a few words on the conditions which must govern it, and the general course which it may be expected to follow.

Speaking first of England, I desire to express my earnest conviction that no reforms of the English land system are likely to be permanent or beneficial which are not in harmony with the organic and apparently indestructible elements of our national character. The new rural economy of England must, above all, be essentially and thoroughly English. It cannot be modelled upon that of France, or Germany, or Russia, or Switzerland, or Italy, or Belgium, or the United States. On the other hand, we must beware, once more, of imagining that all the distinctive features of the English land system must

needs be the spontaneous growth of the national character and history. We know, on the contrary, that in Saxon times the agrarian constitution of England was essentially democratic; that in Norman times ecclesiastics rather than barons were the pioneers of agricultural improvement, and the models of territorial benevolence; that in the England of Elizabeth, and for two centuries after the Reformation, the lesser gentry and yeomanry were the bone and sinew of the landed interest; that the dependent condition of English labourers dates from the poor-law, and that of English farmers from a far more recent period; that, in fact, the English land system is not an indigenous product of the soil, but an artificial creation of feudal lawyers, matured by their successors in the evil days after the Restoration, largely modified by such temporary causes as the high prices current during the Great War, and afterwards strengthened by a constant flow of population towards great towns, partly consequent on the operation of the land system itself.

I will not conceal my belief that, before another generation has elapsed, the law of Primogeniture will have been abolished, that the power of entail will have been largely restricted, that by these means and by simpler methods of land transfer land will come to be divided among a larger number of owners, that, by degrees, more landlords will farm their own land, and more farmers will own the land which they cultivate, that leases will more and more be substituted for yearly tenancy, and that labourers, no longer divorced from the soil, but enabled to rise by industry into the class of farmers, will regain the self-respect and providence which are the special virtues of a true peasantry.

V. Let us lastly turn our eyes, once more, to the Irish land system, if that can be called a land system which is a patchwork of antique customs and modern enactments, plastered one upon another, with little regard to consistency or symmetry. It is not my purpose to criticise the policy of the new Irish Land Bill; it may or may not be a necessary sequel to the Act of 1870; it may be framed in a spirit of justice, or

it may have been dictated by political expediency. With all this we have nothing to do. What mainly concerns us is its self-evident tendency to establish a new form of double ownership, or agrarian partnership between landlord and tenant. We sometimes hear the great reforms carried out by Stein and Hardenberg in Prussia cited as a precedent for such legislation. Exactly the reverse is the fact. The reforms of Stein and Hardenberg were directed, and successfully directed, to substitute unity of ownership for double ownership—to give the peasant the greater part of his former holding as his own absolute property; relieved of all vexatious services; and to compensate the landlord for the loss of those services by a fixed allotment of land or by a fixed rent. In other words, these reforms substituted proprietorship for landlordism and tenancy, but left freedom of contract untouched. The reforms now proposed for Ireland assume the maintenance of the relation between landlord and tenant, but place the regulation of it in the hands of a Court, and virtually abolish freedom of contract. There is no rashness in predicting that, under such circumstances, the relation will be found intolerable, and that in the end the same result at which Stein and Hardenberg deliberately aimed will be produced by the very opposite process. Either by the aid of facilities provided in the Bill itself, or by private agreements, Irish landlords will part with their estates in large numbers, and Irish tenants will be the nominal purchasers. Whether, having purchased, they will cultivate the land themselves, or convert themselves into squireens, whether they will keep out of the hands of money-lenders, and whether money-lenders may not become the worst of landlords, and whether those who chance to be without land just now will tamely acquiesce in their exclusion from the privileged caste of irremovable tenants—these are questions into which I must not wander. What is certain is that, come what may, the experiment of peasant ownership or farmer ownership will be tried in Ireland as it has never been tried before.

It may be said, with too much reason, that Irish tenants

as a class have never yet exhibited the far-sighted industry which has become traditional and hereditary among French or Belgian peasants, and upon which peasant ownership in France or Belgium depends for its success. It may be said, on the other hand, that Irish tenants are already their own masters for most purposes, and that the civilising influence of country gentlemen with their families is already little felt in the great majority of Irish parishes. The transition from landlordism to farmer proprietorship would, therefore, be far gentler, and attended by much less of social change, in Ireland than in England. Nor must it be forgotten that French peasants, as described by Arthur Young a hundred years ago, did not differ widely from small Irish farmers in the present day. The 'magic of property' has assuredly worked miracles in making them what they now are, and the magic of property is likely to be more potent in Ireland than in France, because it would place the new proprietor entirely above the influence of those agitators who now trade upon his wrongs, real or imaginary, and would give him a direct interest in the maintenance of law and order.

And thus it may come to pass that under the operation of different causes—some of them natural and some artificial, some in themselves pernicious, and some beneficent—the Irish land system may gravitate in the same direction as the English land system, and assume a more democratic aspect. Considering the history and national character of the Irish people, we are not warranted in forecasting with confidence the result of such a development. The utmost that we can affirm is that it affords a better prospect of a stable equilibrium in Ireland than the modern English form of rural economy. There is a fine passage in Edmund Spenser's 'View of Ireland,' written in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, where he supposes one of two friends to suggest various remedies for the improvement of Ireland, and puts into the mouth of the other the following reply:—

'Marry, so there have been divers good plots devised, and wise counsels cast already about reformation of that realm;

but they say it is the fatal destiny of that land, that no purposes, whatsoever are meant for her good, will prosper or take good effect ; which whether it proceed from the very genius of the soil, or influence of the stars, or that Almighty God hath not yet appointed the time of her reformation, or that He reserveth her in this unquiet state still for some secret scourge which shall by her come into England, it is hard to be known but yet much to be feared.'

It would be difficult to express in language more pathetic or appropriate the anxieties and misgivings which still oppress the most hopeful minds in legislating for Ireland, after the lapse of three hundred years. But despair can have no place in the counsels of statesmen. It cannot be that Ireland is eternally doomed either by the genius of her soil, or by the influence of the stars, or by the decrees of an inexorable Providence, to brood helplessly over her ancient wrongs, an unprofitable and irreconcilable member of the European family. There must surely be a happier and better future reserved for her too in the fulness of time, and this future may be expected to date from the day on which Parliament shall accomplish, —not a provisional and one-sided adjustment, but a comprehensive, just, and permanent settlement,—of the Irish land system.



*THE IRISH LAND ACT OF 1881: ITS ORIGIN  
AND ITS CONSEQUENCES*<sup>1</sup>

I

TWELVE years have now elapsed since a great measure, designed to settle the Irish Land Question for ever, was prepared by Mr. Gladstone during his first Administration. The ground had been cleared for it by the most exhaustive inquiries, and the longest series of tentative bills, which had ever formed the basis of agrarian legislation in this country. The report of the Devon Commission, published just before the great Irish famine of 1847, had furnished a most comprehensive body of evidence on the conditions of Irish land-tenure, which subsequent investigations, official and unofficial, had illustrated rather than superseded. Eight tenant-right bills, founded on this report, or those of Parliamentary Committees, were introduced by Mr. Sharman Crawford alone; six more were introduced by other private members before 1858, and several others after that year; seven more were introduced on behalf of Liberal or Conservative Ministries; and one bill, which sometimes bears the name of Lord Cardwell and sometimes of Lord Justice Deasy, had actually passed into law, in the year 1860. The admitted failure of Lord Cardwell's Act, which embodied the strict principles of contract, induced the Legislature to import the perilously vague idea of tenure by custom into the Anglo-Irish law of landlord and tenant. Though it is now the fashion to ignore the Irish Land Act of 1870 almost as completely as that of 1860, it may not be amiss to remind ourselves of the benefits which it conferred on the Irish tenant, at the expense of the Irish

<sup>1</sup> An Address delivered in the Hall of Merton College, Oxford, on December 5, 1881.

landlord—benefits which no English tenant enjoys, and for which no parallel can be found in the agrarian codes of Europe.

By the Irish Land Act of 1870, Ulster tenant-right, and like customs in other parts of Ireland, obtained legal validity. It was enacted that all improvements should be presumed to have been made by the tenant or his predecessors, and compensation was guaranteed to him, not only for buildings or drainage, but for tillages, manures, and crops. Moreover, it was provided that he should not forfeit this right, even when ejected for non-payment of rent. Irish tenants were further endowed, for the first time, not, indeed, with an actual property in their holdings, but with a beneficial right of occupancy, secured by a heavy fine on disturbance, which might amount to seven years' rent. This claim to compensation for disturbance, like the claim to compensation for improvements, was made indefeasible in favour of all tenancies under 50*l.* valuation, that is to say, in the vast majority of cases to which the Act applied. It is true that eviction for non-payment of rent was not to be generally construed as 'disturbance,' but it was expressly declared that even such eviction was to be so construed in favour of tenancies under 15*l.* rental, 'if the Court should certify that the non-payment of rent causing the eviction had arisen from the rent being an *exorbitant* rent.' Nor was this all. Where no claim should be made for improvements or for disturbance, the tenant was still enabled to obtain such compensation as the Court might think just, if he or his predecessors in title had given money, or money's worth, for the farm, with the landlord's consent, either express or implied. Lastly, under the Equities clause, the Court was invested with the largest possible discretion to review the 'conduct' of both parties, and to mulct either for 'unreasonable conduct, giving judgment on the case with regard to all its circumstances.'

Such was the Act which is now described, especially by those who have never studied it, as lamentably deficient in liberality towards Irish tenants. It might be alleged, with far greater reason, that it placed the Irish tenant in a position

inconsistent with the fundamental idea of tenancy, and thus sowed the seed of further agitation. The course which that agitation would inevitably take was clearly foreseen by many, and among others by the late Lord Beaconsfield. He pointed out that, under the name of compensation for disturbance, a proprietary interest worth several years' purchase was vested in the Irish tenant, and that since he was made liable to forfeit this interest by non-payment of rent, he would not long submit to his rent being raised at the pleasure of his landlord. The claim to 'fair rent,' as well as to 'fixity of tenure,' had been advocated some years earlier, with great ability, by Mr. Isaac Butt. In a pamphlet, first published in November 1866, he proposed that every agricultural tenant in Ireland should be entitled to a lease of his holding for sixty-three years, at a rent to be fixed by valuation, on the principle of deducting one-third from the extreme rack-rent value. But it is not unworthy of notice that Mr. Butt, a sound lawyer and a veteran economist, never contemplated the universal concession of 'Free Sale,' and vigorously maintained that non-payment of the rent once fixed, as well as failure to cultivate properly and to maintain all improvements, should be followed by an absolute forfeiture of the tenant's interest, *without power of redemption*. Looking back at the agrarian history of Ireland during the last ten years, we may well hold that Mr. Butt's policy was, in the main, wiser than that which dictated the measure of 1870. Had this policy been adopted, the rental of Ireland would probably have been somewhat reduced, on the whole, but it would have been secured by the most stringent conditions, and the relations between landlord and tenant would have been placed on a definite basis for two generations. Moreover, a full share of any accidental increase in the value of the land was carefully reserved to landlords by special clauses in Mr. Butt's draft bill, which compares most favourably, in respect of simplicity, with the Acts both of 1870 and of 1881.

For several years, however, the Act of 1870 appeared to be working smoothly, and to have been accepted as a final

settlement of the Irish Land Question. And such it might, indeed, have proved, with occasional modifications and amendments, had not the exigencies of Irish partisanship demanded a fresh agrarian agitation. Doubtless, the rigorous exaction of rents, and eviction of defaulting tenants, by some Irish landlords, after the bad seasons of 1878 and 1879, furnished a convenient starting-point for such agitation, and, in a few cases already tried before the Land Commission, even the agent admitted the rents to be excessive. But it is historically certain that no widespread discontent existed until it was artificially fomented, and that, as the Duke of Argyll stated, for one oppressive landlord it would have been easy to find thousands of tenants holding back their rents, though well able to pay them, and practising on the forbearance of their landlords, before they were taught by the Land League to repudiate their own agreements and defy the law. The formation of this League was notoriously an after-thought of men, with no interest in land, whose primary aim was the separation of Ireland from Great Britain, and to whom the supposed wrongs of the peasantry were a mere instrument for the propagation of Fenian doctrines. The most effectual method of counteracting it would have been to institute an impartial inquiry into the effects of the Land Act of 1870; to meet temporary distress by temporary measures of relief at the national cost; and to declare that no permanent remedial legislation could be attempted until order and tranquillity should have been restored. Unhappily, other counsels prevailed. A Commission was appointed, indeed; but if it did not start with a foregone conclusion in favour of the Three F's, its proceedings gave some colour to such an imputation. Instead of clearing up on official authority such questions as the average proportion between Irish rentals in 1880 and Griffith's valuation, the relative value of improvements executed by landlords and improvements executed by tenants, the relative numbers of farms held by mere parole agreement and of those held under written contract, the Commissioners amassed, without digesting, a vast body of evidence on the

alleged extortions of landlords and land agents. This evidence they published together with their own Report, without even waiting for the counter-evidence which they had themselves invited, and which, in the opinion of many, cut the ground from under several of their main conclusions. Meanwhile a bill was introduced, nominally of a provisional nature, but really embodying wholly new principles, from which it thenceforth became impossible for the Government to recede. This bill, called the Disturbance Bill, was rejected by the House of Lords. The natural result was what Mr. Healy calls 'the most determined,' and what assuredly was the most unscrupulous, agitation ever known in Ireland, for the purpose of forcing the hand of the Government, and intimidating the landowners of Ireland into the acceptance of any measure which should purport to preserve for them a remnant of their former revenues. How far these designs were successful now remains to be explained.

## II

The Irish Land Act, or, as it is officially entitled, 'The Land Law Act (Ireland),' of 1881, is probably the most complicated piece of legal mechanism that has been produced by parliamentary draughtsmen within living memory. This is its most obvious and least venial demerit. The Act of 1870 was obscured by a variety of refinements and qualifications which had gone far to obstruct its working and enrich the lawyers. These have been aggravated and multiplied tenfold by the Act of the present year, which does not even repeal the former, but expressly incorporates certain parts of it, and leaves other parts to operate, as best they may, side by side with its own provisions. It would be utterly hopeless to follow the process whereby the original bill was evolved into its existing shape by amendments from both sides and all sections of the House. We can but sketch the leading features of the measure as it now stands in the Statute-book. And here we may derive considerable assistance from an extraordinary document put forth by the Land Commissioners

appointed under the Act itself. These gentlemen, being invested with essentially judicial functions, might have been expected to adopt a judicial attitude, and to regard themselves as charged to administer a new law, with even hand, between landlord and tenant. They felt it consistent with their duty, however, to issue a statement exclusively addressed to one of these parties, detailing all the 'benefits conferred on Irish tenant-farmers by the Land Act (Ireland), 1881,' and pointing out all the advantages which they may take under the new law. This commentary is but expanded in the valuable 'Tenant's Key to the Land Law Act, 1881,' drawn up by Mr. Healy. Both justly represent the Act to be a legislative embodiment of the Three F's, as recommended by the Bessborough Commission, and it may be convenient to review its provisions under the heads suggested by the several articles of that famous agrarian charter.

Here followed a detailed analysis of the main provisions of the Act, showing that 'Free Sale,' as there defined, goes far beyond the Ulster custom; that 'Fair Rent' is left to be ascertained by the arbitrary discretion of the Commissioners, but on principles essentially one-sided; that 'Fixity of Tenure' is practically granted, without the equitable conditions proposed by Mr. Butt; and that, while 'future tenants' are placed in an inferior position to 'present tenants,' they are invested with privileges enjoyed by no other tenants in Europe.

It is, therefore, perfectly idle to suggest that, whereas the Act strictly regulates the rights of existing landlords and tenants, it paves the way for a revival of free contract in future. In reality, free contract, in the English, Scotch, American, and Continental sense, is banished for ever from agricultural relations in Ireland. The more carefully we study the incidental and supplementary provisions of the Act, the more clearly shall we realise that it is framed with a single view to stereotype the possession of existing tenant-farmers, with equally little regard for the interests of landlords, of labourers, or of those who may hereafter wish to become possessors of farms. For example, section 8 contains

a peremptory direction against rent being raised in respect of improvements made by tenants or their predecessors in title ; but another clause of the section, exempting from its operation holdings upon which all the improvements have been made by the landlord or his predecessors, is not peremptory, but merely permissive. So, the statutory term introduced for the first time by the Act is practically a lease for fifteen years in favour of the tenant, but not in favour of the landlord, for a lessee is bound to carry out all the agreements in his lease, but the holder of the statutory term can surrender it, though he cannot be evicted. In like manner, the numberless limitations of landlord's rights under the Act are compensated by no corresponding facilities for enforcing those rights. Even when a tenant has broken the primary statutory condition by non-payment of rent, the landlord has only the ordinary remedy of ejectionment. This remedy cannot be employed, even to the extent of instituting proceedings, until one whole year's rent is in arrear. The defaulting tenant can then hold on until execution is imminent with perfect impunity, and even after it has taken place, retains his old right of redeeming within the next six months, when he will recover his statutory tenancy with no penalty except the liability to costs. Or he may prefer to sell his tenancy ; though in this case the landlord will be entitled to arrears of rent and damages for injury actually sustained, out of the purchase money. Mr. Healy reminds him, however, that by selling just before the ejectionment is brought, he can dispose of a statutory tenancy subsisting in full vigour, with an unlimited right of renewal. A tenant who breaks any other of the five statutory conditions must get, in addition, a year's notice to quit. But this notice to quit will have no great terrors for him, if he can make a plausible excuse. For it is expressly provided that he may apply to the Court to be relieved from the consequences of any such breach on payment of damages and costs ; or without any payment, if the breach is regarded as harmless by the Court. At the very worst, a tenant evicted for a breach of statutory conditions is entitled to

compensation for improvements under the Land Act of 1870, and, if holding under the Ulster custom, will forfeit none of its benefits thereby.

A like protective spirit, the very reverse of equal justice, may be traced in the clauses relating to labourers' cottages, and other improvements usually made by landlords. The landlord may, indeed, resume the whole or part of a holding on satisfying the Court that his object is 'for the good of the holding or the estate,' and these words might certainly be interpreted in a sense to give him some control over his own property. But it is to be feared that they may be construed as limited by those which follow, specifying cottage-building, church-building, and so forth, as the chief purposes for which the power is granted. At all events, the landlord must now buy up the tenant-right in order to build labourers' cottages, notwithstanding a special provision to the contrary in the Act of 1870. But the tenant may let ground for cottages and allotments, with the sanction of the Court, at a profitable rent, without any such outlay; and, if required by the Court to improve the cottage accommodation of a holding on which he seeks to have the rent lowered, he may borrow money from the State as if he were an owner. So, again, while tenants may improve their holdings for their own benefit, without the landlord's consent, with a legislative guarantee against the rent being raised on that account, no landlord can obtain an increase of rent upon capital laid out in improvement, except by special agreement with his tenant.

It is to be observed, however, that although very large prospective sacrifices are required of Irish landlords, no claim to rent already due was taken away by the Act. The fourth section plainly declares that 'nothing therein contained shall prejudice or affect any ejectment for non-payment of rent instituted by a landlord, whether before or after the commencement of a statutory term, in respect of rent accrued due for a holding before the commencement of such term.' It would be far better, if it had declared broadly that no benefit conferred by it should be open to any tenant who had



failed to satisfy his lawful debts to his landlord before applying to the Court. We may pass lightly over the so-called arrears-clause, under which the Land Commission is empowered to advance the landlord a part of the rent in arrear, because it can only operate where the landlord is willing to accept a composition of so many shillings in the pound. In such a case, if a landlord will take a nominal sum in lieu of the last year's rent, a tenant whose rent is 15*l.*, and is three years in arrear, may have the whole 45*l.* wiped off, on condition of paying a rent of little more than 16*l.* during the next fifteen years. If the landlord should not be so forbearing, the tenant, as we have already seen, retains the right of getting his rent fixed by the Court, and selling his tenancy upon the new rent, however much he may be in arrear with the old rent. While his application is pending, the proceedings in ejectionment will be stayed, and if the rent ultimately fixed should be a full rent, the purchase money will be all the less, and probably not sufficient to pay off heavy arrears. Still, the Act does not go the length of confiscating arrears, and giving fixity of tenure to a tenant who has lawfully incurred the penalty of ejectionment before it passed. It would be still possible, therefore, for Irish landlords to get rid of defaulting tenants before they can become rooted in the soil under the Land Act; though self-interest, as well as more generous motives, would usually recommend the alternative of making terms with them. And since the small cottier-tenants of Connaught are incapable of paying any rent in bad years, the one class most deserving of sympathy will hardly share the benefit of the Act.

But a most violent interference with vested interests is contained in the twenty-first section. One part of this section deprives the landlord of his reversion at the end of an existing lease; another part enacts that if any lessee can satisfy the Court that his lease was forced upon him by threat of eviction or undue influence, being in itself unreasonable or unfair, the Court may quash the lease, and treat the tenant as the holder of a present yearly tenancy. That is to say,

the Court is to review the circumstances under which each lease was granted, and determine 'whether it is such as a prudent tenant would have accepted unless under some pressure from his landlord.' If not, it is to become void, and the tenant can at once obtain a readjustment of his rent. It is needless to remark that, if it should prove to be such as no prudent landlord would have granted, and however strongly justice may require it to be set aside on his behalf, the Court has no power to award such redress. Its action in this, as in other cases, is to be wholly one-sided. By the next section, no tenant whose holding is valued below 150*l.* shall be allowed to contract himself out of this Act or the Act of 1870. The right of contract as between landlord and tenant is, therefore, henceforth at an end in Ireland, except as regards a very small fraction of tenancies. All the apparent exceptions recognised in the Act are perfectly illusory, since they must all come under the control of the Court.

Hitherto the mode in which the Court has exercised its discretion has not been such as to command the confidence of impartial critics. But however they may have strained the letter, the Commissioners have scarcely gone—for indeed they could scarcely go—beyond the spirit of the Act. It was certainly a strange proceeding to invite applications by a notice specially addressed to tenants—but then the Land Act itself was passed for the sole benefit of tenants. It is a perilous doctrine to lay down that rents should be so adjusted that a tenant may 'live and thrive' on his farm; but then why did the Legislature admit such a phrase as 'fair rent' without definition into a statute? Whether or not it was reasonable that, under section 60 of the Act, applications made on the first occasion when the Land Commission might sit should be treated as made on the day when the Act itself came into force, it seems monstrous that, having opened their sittings on October 20, the Commissioners should have extended their so-called first sitting to October 29, and afterwards to November 12. But then it was the obvious intention of Parliament to stretch every point of equity in favour of the

tenant, and perhaps the privilege of post-dating his right of redemption is trifling compared with some other privileges reserved to him. No wonder that if the Commissioners have thus interpreted their duties, the Sub-Commissioners should have justified wholesale, sweeping, and indiscriminate reductions of rent by reasons destructive of each other. Mr. Gladstone and Lord Carlingford expressed their conviction that Irish rents in general would be very slightly reduced; but the Sub-Commissioners fail to discover this conviction in the Act: 'they cannot find it; it is not in the bond.' One rent may be reduced because the land has been greatly improved by the tenant, who must be rewarded for his energy; another, because it has become impoverished by the tenant's neglect. One tenant is entitled to compassion because his family is large; another, because, having no family, he must pay high wages to labourers. Rents must, of course, be reduced if they have been raised in years of plenty; but they must also be reduced if they have been lowered in years of scarcity and remained at that level; for if the agent thought some remission necessary, it must be inferred that humanity required a larger remission. The Court is not to consider what the land would be worth in good hands, but what it is worth in the hands of the actual occupier, perhaps the worst and most thriftless of his class. It is not to consider the agreement made between landlord and tenant, for no landlord can be allowed to profit by superior force or fraud; still less is it to consider the value of concessions made by the landlord out of kindness; for no man, or rather no landlord, can be allowed to profit by his own weakness. The owner of hereditary estates must not complain of his rent being lowered; for, depend upon it, some remote ancestor came by the land unjustly; and the fact of no increase having been made for the last fifty years is a presumption of rents having been screwed up for the fifty years before. The purchasers of land in the Encumbered Estates Court deserve no consideration; for tenant-right was ignored in those purchases, and it is now high time to make reprisals on landlord-right.

Such are no unfair specimens of the reasoning which appears to underlie many of the more important decisions already given by the Sub-Commissioners, and which has occasionally found expression in their statements from the Bench. Of course these decisions may be overruled on appeal, but the Commissioners in Dublin have postponed hearing appeals until after they shall have completed the process of breaking 'unreasonable' leases. Unhappily, they cannot postpone the influence of such judicial acts and opinions over Irish minds possessed with the creed of the Land League. Nor have we a right to expect that highly popular decisions will be lightly overruled by those who administer an Act so evidently framed to satisfy the requirements—not of economical justice, but of political expediency.

### III

1, 2. This is not the place to dwell on the portentous and demoralising effect of the Land Act, as an avowed concession to criminal agitation, directly stimulating the renewal of such agitation. Its next effect will be felt in the legislative extinction of freedom in the conduct of by far the most important industry and social relation in Ireland. Nothing like it has yet been known in Europe. The purport of the agrarian reforms made during the French Revolution is to be read in a few pages of the Code Napoléon, which treat agricultural tenancy as a mere form of hiring, and regulate it by the strictest principles of contract. The reforms of Stein and Hardenberg, so often cited in support of double ownership, were really designed to establish the very contrary, entire unity of ownership; and, instead of confiscating landlords' property for the benefit of tenants, actually confiscated tenants' property for the benefit of landlords, though a full equivalent was secured for the dispossessed tenants in the exemption from vexatious liabilities. To justify this departure from the practice of civilised nations, it is assumed that Irish tenants, alone among the industrial members of civilised society, are not free agents; and to justify this assumption, it is further

assumed that, unless they accept their landlords' terms, they must needs starve. It is forgotten that, as a matter of fact, millions of them have bettered themselves by emigrating to America, and many hundreds of thousands find employment in the manufacturing towns of Great Britain. It is forgotten that no soil can possibly support a constantly multiplying peasantry, and that English farmers must long ago have devoured each other if they had insisted on keeping their families around them, instead of launching them forth into the world. It is forgotten that many other classes, such as artisans or labourers in the East of London, have quite as strong a claim to be protected against the possible extortion of rapacious landlords, paying high rents, yet getting nothing out of the soil. It is forgotten, moreover, or if not forgotten, it is wilfully ignored, that by erecting the existing tenants of farms into a landholding caste, an irreparable wrong is done, not only to all the existing labourers and landless farmers who happen to be outside that class, but also to all future applicants. Thirteen years ago, Judge Longfield denounced any measure which should enable a man who takes a farm to-day without payment to sell his lease to-morrow for several hundred pounds. 'This,' he says, 'is to give him a property which he did not purchase or earn, merely because he threatens to commit murder if he is kept to his engagements.' But this is precisely what has been done by the Land Act; and from this moment it is certain that every farm which changes hands in Ireland must needs be practically rack-rented. The lower the landlord's rent, the higher the value of the tenant-right; and no tenant, squeezed between these upper and nether millstones, can possibly hope to farm at a profit.

3. This consideration suggests a third and no less disastrous effect of the Land Act. It is well known that ever since they acquired a marketable interest in their holdings under the Act of 1870, Irish tenants have been more and more in the hands of money-lenders, against whose exactions Parliamentary intervention has never been invoked. A mass

of evidence was laid before the Bessborough Commission, showing that borrowing upon tenant right was the curse of Ulster, and has increased many-fold since the Act of 1870. In the face of these notorious facts and evidence, Irish tenants have now been almost invited to mortgage their holdings. In addition to any charge which the landlord may have upon it for himself or his creditors, the land may now have to bear interest on the sum which the incoming tenant has borrowed for the purchase of tenant-right, interest on any money which he may yet borrow from the Government or 'gombeen-men' for improvements or labourers' cottages, and interest on what he will probably succeed in raising from the same local usurers for his daughters' marriage portions. It is quite possible that a new Encumbered Estates Court will soon be needed to clear the land from this enormous pressure of debt; but it is equally possible that, in such an event, the debtors will form a new Land League against the creditors. As for the landlord's rent, however ruthlessly it may have been pared down, it will assuredly be the last debt to be paid, and either it will vanish altogether, or it will have to be exacted by a constant resort to eviction. The one class in the community which has already gained, and must inevitably gain, more than any other from this revolution in the rural economy of Ireland, is the lower class of legal practitioners. If the money that is now going and about to go in the pockets of Irish lawyers under the incentives to litigation afforded by the Act, could have been applied to indemnifying every Irish tenant who had a real grievance, it would have gone far to allay all well-founded discontent.

To suppose that such a measure can produce a permanent settlement of agrarian relations in Ireland, is to expect that the laws of human nature, as well as those of political economy, will be reversed in that island. Deprived of all motives for residing in the country, or improving their estates, most Irish landowners above the rank of squireens will either dispose of their properties, generally at a ruinous loss, or sink into the position of mere rent-chargers. Thus thrown out of

employment, and left more and more at the mercy of tenant-farmers, the class of labourers, which, throughout history, has furnished the readiest instruments of Irish outrage, will become more dangerous than ever. The one and only hope that remains for the prosperity and peace of Ireland, under the new Land Act, lies in the scheme which it contains for the creation of a peasant proprietary. If a tenant contracts directly with his landlord for the purchase of his farm, the Land Commission is empowered to advance him three-fourths of the price, if he can pay down the other fourth. Again, where three-fourths of the tenants on an estate are willing to purchase their farms, and certain other conditions are satisfied, the Land Commission may buy up the whole estate, and resell it, advancing three-fourths of the price to each purchaser as before. The advance is to be repaid by annual instalments of 5 per cent. on the sum advanced, extending over thirty-five years; the effect of which is that a tenant buying his farm will only have to pay a fraction more than his ordinary rent, to become master of it in thirty-five years. This is well explained in the short treatise of Mr. Macdevitt on the Land Act. Suppose a man has a farm at 20*l.* a year rent. 'Its probable value would be 400*l.*, or twenty years' purchase. The Land Commission will advance him 300*l.* He will have to provide the remaining 100*l.* or raise it in some other way; but if he has the 100*l.* and pays it, he will have to go into debt to the Commission only, and that for the 300*l.* For that sum, principal and interest, he will have to pay the Commission 15*l.* a year for thirty-five years, and then the farm is his own altogether.'

Though Part V. of the Land Act, which contains these provisions, with those for Reclamation and Emigration, is essentially supplemental in its nature, and though it has scarcely begun to operate, there is no rashness in predicting that it will hereafter prove the most important chapter of the new agrarian code. The authors of the Act never ceased to protest that it could not lead to a wholesale reduction of rents, fully admitting that, if it should do so, aggrieved landlords

would have a claim to compensation. Unless these public declarations are to be publicly repudiated, the claim to compensation will now have to be recognised, and the simplest form of compensation would be the conversion of a judicial rent into a rent-charge on the holding, which the State should buy on fair terms from the landlords. This rent-charge would then become, in effect, a terminable land tax; and until it was paid off, the State would be the paramount landowner. No doubt there are grave objections to State-ownership; but these objections have been all but set aside in the scheme for advances to purchasing tenants. No doubt it is a serious question whether small Irish farmers are fitted to be their own landlords, subject only to a land-tax, and whether all the legal safeguards that can be devised will prevent their subletting their lands three deep, or loading them with successive mortgages. But this question has been silenced by the supposed necessity of granting the charter of the 'Three F's, since the perpetual occupier of a farm at a fixed rent, with an unlimited power of sale, has all the attributes of an owner except the full sense of responsibility.

Upon the development of this sense, with the self-respect and loyalty that naturally spring from it, depends the last chance of political and social regeneration in Ireland. The controlling influence of the Protestant clergy was inevitably weakened by Disestablishment; that of the priests has been sensibly undermined by the spread of Fenian ideas. The interest of the landlords, the one remaining bulwark of social order in Ireland, and the one security for the expenditure of capital, has been hopelessly shattered by the Land Act. Henceforth the Irish peasant farmers will be masters of the country; for there is no urban middle class to balance them, and no public opinion except that which is fabricated by newspapers to flatter their ignorant passions. Since they must be a landed democracy in fact, let them be elevated into a landed democracy by law, and encouraged, if it may be, to acquire those democratic virtues in which they are so deplorably wanting. It is said that in the lawless days which



preceded the second conquest of Ireland under the Tudor sovereigns, the Irish Council invoked the intervention of Henry VII. to put down the great Earl of Kildare. 'All Ireland,' they protested, 'cannot govern this man.' 'Then,' replied the King, 'this man shall govern all Ireland.' A similar policy seems to have inspired the Irish Land Act of 1881; let us hope that it will be less ruinous in its results. Despairing at last of appeasing the land-hunger of Irish peasant farmers upon any known principles of justice or political economy, the Legislature has now delivered over the agricultural and social destinies of Ireland into the hands of that ungovernable class, placing the labourers under their guardianship, and reducing the landlords to a position in which they are equally powerless for good or for evil. Having gone so far, let us not shrink from going a step further, abolishing the figment of landlordism, and leaving no semblance of paternal authority in the rural districts of Ireland.

The high authority of Judge Longfield may, it is true, be cited against the creation of a peasant-proprietary in Ireland. He believes that 'if all the land in Ireland were divided in fee-simple among the peasantry, the number of murders would not be diminished;' and he reminds us that, 'when the Celt becomes the absolute owner of land, he is just as willing as the Saxon to become a landlord, and to insist upon all a landlord's rights, which he then seems to think very reasonable.' All this is but too evident. It is probable enough that, with the growth of peasant proprietorship, sanguinary domestic feuds may take the place of attacks on land-agents or process-servers, and that Irish agrarian outrage, instead of being quelled, may simply revert towards its original type. But, while this is probable, the continuance of anarchy, despite the operation of the new Land Act, is an ascertained fact. Under every system of tenancy, Irish character has proved utterly intractable; the one experiment that remains to be tried is a system of pure ownership. With no one to coax, and no one to intimidate, with the whole burden of local government and taxation cast upon

him, with a discontented class of labourers to conciliate, and with State officials instead of land-agents to enforce the payment of his land-tax, the Irish peasant farmer, like the Scotch clansman, may one day perchance be transformed into a peaceable citizen, tenacious of his rights but mindful of his duties; and not only the sinister origin, but the chimerical aims, of the last Irish Land Act may even yet be forgotten in the beneficence of its unforeseen effects.

*THE CLAIM OF TENANT-RIGHT FOR  
BRITISH FARMERS*

Fraser's Magazine, 1882

THE influence of the last Irish Land Act could not fail to make itself speedily felt in a novel claim of Tenant-right for British farmers. The phrase 'tenant-right,' it is true, has long been a familiar watchword of agricultural reform. But until lately this phrase has been used in a very limited acceptance. The custom of Lincolnshire Tenant-right, for instance, liberal though it might be, was never understood to extend beyond the establishment of certain equities, chiefly by way of compensation for the unexhausted value of improvements, as between outgoing tenants and landlords or incoming tenants.<sup>1</sup> Even Ulster Tenant-right, though often very loosely defined and referred to a fanciful origin, was admitted to rest upon this and no other basis. The assumption always was that the land had been originally redeemed from its prairie state by the tenant's predecessors in title, and that a second property in it had thus been created, with the landlord's consent, which possessed a marketable value. It is worthy of remark that Irish 'tenants' improvements,' in this sense, were specially mentioned by Sir William Petty more than 200 years ago, and there is reason to believe that some of the customary securities for such improvements still prevailing in certain English counties are of a very ancient date. Estates have been inherited and farms have been taken for generations subject to local customs of this kind,

<sup>1</sup> In Mr. Dixon's *Law of the Farm*, tenant-right is defined as 'the claim for remuneration which an outgoing agricultural tenant has on his landlord for various operations of husbandry, the ordinary return of which he is precluded from receiving by the termination of his tenancy.'

which have been imported by law, like the customs of trade, into every contract between landlord and tenant, in the absence of express words to the contrary. The utmost that was claimed for English farmers by the late Mr. Pusey and other reformers of his school was that the best existing customs should be expressly legalised and nationalised. As for Scotch farmers, the great majority of them were perfectly content with the nineteen-year leases so long established in Scotland, and scorned the idea of legal protection—except, indeed, against the ravages of hares and rabbits.

The modern claim of Tenant-right is of an entirely different nature, and is advocated on principles of which the first legislative recognition is to be found in the Irish Land Act of 1870. By giving tenants an *indefeasible* claim to compensation for improvements, but, far more, by giving them a beneficial right of possession, guarded and measured by a heavy penalty on ‘disturbance,’ that Act crippled the power of landlords either for good or for evil, and threw Ireland back from a system of tenure by contract towards a system of tenure by status. From that moment a new idea of agrarian relations has entered the minds of British farmers. At last, since the Irish Land Act of 1881, it has shaped itself into demands, reasonable, indeed, by comparison with that Act, yet quite irreconcilable with freedom of contract, and put forth under the authority of the Farmers’ Alliance in the form of separate bills for England and Scotland respectively. The leading provisions of these Bills are the same, but certain distinctive features in them require separate notice.

Here followed a detailed analysis of the Bills for England and Scotland promoted by the Farmers’ Alliance, showing wherein they differ from the Irish Land Act, and a short account of the Bill adopted by the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture.

Of course, the most distinctive feature common to all these Bills is the unconditional and undisguised surrender of Contract as the basis of agricultural relations. Sir Henry Maine tells us that in all progressive societies the movement, from a juridical point of view, has been a movement from

Status to Contract. We have seen, however, that of late years, and especially since the Irish Land Act of 1870, there has been a growing tendency in this country to demand a reversal of this movement by legislative force. The Irish tenant-right party and their English supporters have openly demanded that all dealings between landlord and tenant should be taken out of the domain of Contract. With strange inconsistency, the very same school of agrarian reformers insist upon the necessity of unrestricted freedom in all other transactions relating to land. They inveigh, with justice, against the legal trammels of Entail and Settlement; they ask, with some ignorance but with much reason, why the sale of land should not be as simple as that of shares or pictures; and they apply, without reservation, all the maxims of Free Trade to landownership and land-transfer. Not only so, but they dwell with peculiar emphasis on the right and capacity of tenant-farmers to contract freely with every other class of human beings except their landlords. As has been well said, 'the man who, on account of the severe competition for land, requires to be emancipated from his contract, is the very man who wants to avail himself of that competition to exact the last farthing he can wrench out of a purchaser, when he sells his farm.' His agreements about the course of cultivation or duration of his tenure, made with the fullest knowledge of all the circumstances, are to be set aside like those of a child or a lunatic, and, no matter how low his rent, he is not to have the power of foregoing any one of the privileges offered to him by the statute. But he must be left perfectly free to contract with the manure-merchant, the maker of agricultural implements, the banker, or the local usurer; in those relations he is to be treated as a shrewd man of business, and the slightest attempt to protect him against their importunities or extortions would be ridiculed as an insult to his intelligence. Surely it is difficult to reconcile these opposite modes of regarding the same class. Surely it is not self-evident that contracts for the hire of land, as the Duke of Argyll calls them, are so radically different from all other

contracts as to call for the minute regulation which formerly prevailed, under tribal ownership, in the Irish Sept and the Hindoo Village Community. There may be, and there are, good reasons why they should be watched by the State with special care, and even subjected to special rules of law; but it has yet to be shown why they should be controlled by that system of official tutelage established under the Irish Land Act.

That Act, if it can be defended at all, must be defended by historical, political, sentimental, or economical reasons which have no application to England or Scotland. Neither English nor Scotch tenants, as a class, have virtually inherited their land, or erected homesteads upon it, or made or maintained substantial improvements, or been treated by the landlord, the agent, their neighbours, or anyone else, as part-owners. They do not resemble copyholders in the smallest degree, being essentially the creatures of contract, and not of custom; especially in Scotland, where the contract is usually made afresh every nineteen years, in the most binding and explicit form—that of a lease. There is no pretence of an unhealthy competition for agricultural holdings in Great Britain, nor can it be alleged that, for want of manufacturing enterprise, a farmer's son without a farm has no alternative but emigration or the workhouse. On the contrary, farms have long been more plentiful than good tenants, and the attractions of other pursuits are such, both in Great Britain and in the colonies, that it is now difficult to keep a good tenant, except on very liberal terms. On what ground, then, is compulsory Tenant-right demanded for British farmers, in a form which involves the principle of the Irish three F's, however modified in degree, and which is designed to override existing agreements?

This question is assuredly not answered in any of the manifestoes hitherto issued by the advocates of compulsory Tenant-right. We must, therefore, endeavour to deal with it for ourselves, not forgetting that in these Bills the protection conceded is not wholly one-sided, but embraces to some

extent the landlord's interests, as well as those of the tenant. One thing is clear. The argument for compulsory Tenant-right in Great Britain essentially rests on grounds of expediency, and hardly at all on grounds of justice. Here and there, no doubt, there may be cases of an English or Scotch landlord confiscating his tenant's improvements, or raising the rent unfairly upon him. But the cases are far more numerous in which the tenant, beggaring out the land, confiscates his landlord's capital; and in both classes of cases the parties might have protected themselves by inserting and enforcing proper clauses in their agreements. Even when such clauses are inserted, there is much truth in the saying that they are good against the landlord, but not against the tenant, who is far more likely to incur bankruptcy, and who, if he should fail in asserting the rights of strength, can usually fall back on the privileges of weakness. If, then, we are not only to place agricultural relations in future under a rigid and uniform system, but to interfere directly with vested interests, our action must be justified by some very strong reason of policy, if not of necessity. Such a reason was pleaded in favour of the Ground Game Bill, which, however, was not forcibly applied to existing leases. Although it was obvious that farmers might easily recoup themselves for the ravages of game by stipulating for a 'game rent,' or might decline clauses reserving game to the landlord, and although, in these days of Free Trade, excessive game-preserving has little influence on the national food supplies, it was felt that an extreme exercise of sporting rights by one man over land occupied by another was prejudicial to interests broader and higher than mere agricultural interests. Let us now consider whether equally cogent reasons can be advanced in favour of compulsory Tenant-right, and, if so, how it should be limited.

Now, granting, for the sake of argument, that a tenant ought to have an indefeasible right of compensation for all improvements which increase the letting value, why should the amount of this compensation be determined by free sale instead of by public valuation, and why should the landlord

be deprived of his right to select another tenant? Of course, the special virtue of Free Sale, in the eyes of its bigoted adherents, is that it implicitly converts a tenant into a part-owner, but it is precisely this double ownership which it is most important to discourage from every economical point of view. Moreover, it is easy to show how impossible it would be to separate the value of goodwill from the value of improvements, and therefore how unfairly a tenant's right to sell the latter in open market would sometimes operate on the landlord's interest. Suppose that B holds a farm of A, and has made improvements which are worth 200*l.* at a fair valuation. But C, who may be a railway contractor, or a manufacturer, or a tradesman with large business premises close at hand, is willing to offer 500*l.* or 1,000*l.* for the right of occupation, not because the improvements are worth so much, but because the land itself has an exceptional value for him. Is B to pocket the whole price of this latent value, and may not A, the owner of the soil, make his own terms with the new tenant, after paying B 200*l.*? But, again, under the plan of Free Sale formulated in these Bills, the door is opened to unlimited fraud, and there could be no possible security against a fictitious applicant being put forward to offer a fancy price for the improvements. It is hopeless for a Court to ascertain whether a man has 'sufficient means' of his own to cultivate a farm, or whether the objections of the landlord to him are 'reasonable.' The highest bidder in the Tenant-right market is not unlikely to be the least eligible as a tenant; and the less eligible he might be as a tenant, the greater would be the necessity for the landlord to buy him off. Hitherto, the stock argument against distress and hypothee has been that landlords are thus encouraged to accept men of straw for tenants. If this clause should become law, they would be often compelled to accept men of straw on pain of a heavy pecuniary fine.

No doubt 'Free Sale,' once conceded, involves 'Fair Rent,' for no tenant could obtain a full price for his improvements from his successor, if the landlord were able to raise



the rent in proportion. It is, in fact, a cardinal objection to Free Sale that, under a specious name, it really puts an end to all freedom in contracts for the hire of land. True, it is not proposed to establish in England a periodical adjudication of rents, such as became a necessity for Ireland when fixity of tenure was there introduced, and such as becomes a necessity for Scotland, under the Farmers' Alliance Bill granting a similar fixity of tenure, at the option of Scotch farmers. The Bill for England ostensibly leaves the parties free to decide whether the existing contract of tenancy shall be renewed at all, and it is only where they are willing to renew it that a compulsory jurisdiction over the future rent is vested in the Court. But it will be renewed *ipso facto* on the old conditions unless two years' notice be given; and whereas, in prospect of renewal, the tenant will have the right of getting the rent adjusted by the Court, and whereas, if it should not be renewed, he will retain the same right with a view to a sale, the landlord's power of getting the market value for the use of his land will be reduced to an infinitesimal minimum. Probably in England it will be easier to find capable and honest assessors to fix the standard of rent than it is in Ireland, but no official valuation can approach in fairness to an open bargain, where both parties are free. One illustration of the difference may perhaps suffice. Under the Farmers' Alliance Bill the Court is prohibited, and justly prohibited, from considering anything but present value as affected by past acts or circumstances. But the fairness of a rent to be paid in future may depend entirely on future acts or circumstances, such as the execution of drainage by either party, or the prospective extension of a railway. These all-important elements are excluded from calculation—as, indeed, they must be, if the Court is to assess rents—and the result may be monstrously unjust either to landlord or tenant.

We must, therefore, reject the claim of Free Sale and judicial rents, still more that of Fixity of Tenure, for British farmers. Indeed, a disposition has already been shown by influential members of the Farmers' Alliance to recede from

the demand of Free Sale, the concession of which is the basis of the Irish Land Act. It is demonstrable that all the advantages which can possibly be derived from these privileges could be obtained by a liberal system of leases; and it is not demonstrable, nor is it true in fact, that British farmers are unable to procure such leases from their landlords. The more tenants are assimilated to copyholders, as they are by the three F's, the more is the landlord's interest in the partnership diminished. The present generation of tenants might gain something which they had not earned. But the inevitable, though gradual, withdrawal of landlords' capital, now virtually lent to farmers at a minimum rate of interest, and the gradual and the rapid accumulation of debt on the security of Tenant-right, would surely render farming less profitable for the next generation. Nor has even a *primâ facie* case been shown for this agrarian revolution, especially in the present state of agriculture. The historical conditions, which are supposed to justify the three F's in Ireland, have no place in Great Britain. No Englishman or Scotchman is compelled to hire land at all. There never was a time when those who may wish to do so could procure it on easier terms. Indeed, so far as we can foresee, British farmers rather than landlords are likely in future to be masters of the land market. If there be a class of British tenants which needs legislative protection against the extortion of landlords, it is assuredly not the class of agricultural tenants, but that of small householders and lodgers in great towns. A few owners of house property in the artisans' quarter of a manufacturing centre may possess a monopoly infinitely more oppressive than the so-called monopoly of agricultural landlords, and the cottagers of agricultural landlords are far more defenceless than the farm-tenants. It is not surprising that a Householders' Fair Rent Alliance has already been formed against ground-landlords, and it ought in reason to be followed by the formation of a Lodgers' Fair Rent Alliance against householders. It may be said, no doubt, that, after all, householders, town lodgers, and cottagers are free to migrate elsewhere.

But then may not this argument be applied, and with much greater force, to farm-tenants, for whose exclusive benefit a modified version of the Irish three F's is now demanded as an act of justice?

It is an entirely different question whether a statutable Tenant-right, in the sense of a right to compensation for the unexhausted value of improvements, is not defensible on grounds of policy. 'It is quite possible to conceive that, under a land-system so highly artificial as that of England, inveterate customs may have grown up, inconsistent with the real interests of landlords as well as tenants, and only to be counteracted by the superior force of law. . . . Society cannot always afford to wait until economical principles have vindicated themselves, perhaps at a ruinous cost to consumers, in the course of generations.'<sup>1</sup> From this point of view there are very strong, if not conclusive, arguments in favour of giving tenants an indefeasible right of compensation for improvements of a certain kind, and landlords a summary remedy, in lieu of distress, against certain defaults on the part of tenants. The precedents for such an interference with contract are too numerous to be cited; it is enough to point out that if agreements 'in restraint of trade' may properly be invalidated, so also may agreements 'in restraint of agriculture.' But it does not follow that an indefeasible right of compensation should be extended to 'anything done by the tenant whereby the letting value of the holding is increased.' So long as the agricultural system of Great Britain is one of tenancy, it is by no means expedient to encourage the tenant in undertaking permanent improvements, which ought to be executed, if at all, by the landlord. Tenants have rarely more than enough capital for the proper cultivation of their farms. If they should enter upon large building, drainage, or reclamation works, they would usually do it on borrowed money, and could not be expected to do it with due regard to the general benefit of the estate. The 'value of the holding' might be increased, but the landlord might have

<sup>1</sup> Brodrick's *English Land and English Landlords*, part iv. ch. ii.

good reasons for subdividing the holding or consolidating it with another, in which case the so-called improvement might be actually detrimental. It is only in respect of agricultural tenancies that so unreasonable a pretension would be entertained for a moment. If a house and garden were let by the year in the suburbs of a town, no one would dream of claiming for the tenant a right to erect villas in the garden at his own pleasure, and to receive compensation if 'the letting value of the holding' were increased thereby. Such a claim is, in fact, inconsistent with full proprietorship, and full proprietorship was always recognised as the highest ideal of land tenure, until retrograde ideas were propagated by the supporters of the Irish Land Act.

On the other hand; no landlord could suffer any injury, while a new spirit might be infused into British agriculture, if an indefeasible right of compensation were secured to every tenant for outlay essential to good husbandry, under the conditions of modern farming. Whether or not the various forms of such outlay are adequately enumerated under the third-class improvements of the Agricultural Holdings Act, does not affect the fundamental principle. That principle is, that, where it is of paramount importance to establish a general sense of security, and where free contract has failed to do so, the State may legitimately effect it by Act of Parliament, for the benefit of all parties concerned; since the sense of security may actually add a new value to land, without robbing anyone. To this extent, and to this extent only, the interests of consumers, so freely invoked in support of Tenant-right, are really concerned in its recognition. Nor would it be difficult to devise a mode of limiting indefeasible Tenant-right. The simplest plan would be to frame clauses, defining ordinary acts of good husbandry, giving an outgoing tenant an absolute right to compensation for their unexhausted value, and creating a machinery whereby that right should be enforced. But a gentler and, perhaps, more effective method of securing the same end, would be to make the compulsory enactments operative only where the parties

should have failed to embody their agreement in a lease of a certain duration. Had the well-known principle of the leases granted by the Earl of Leicester been generally adopted throughout England, it is probable that no wide-spread demand for indefeasible Tenant-right would have arisen. It is equally probable that if indefeasible Tenant-right were established by law, in default of a lease, the practice of granting leases would again become a national custom, as it was in the last century.

Doubtless this would not satisfy the latest claim of Tenant-right for British farmers, as embodied in the Bills already discussed. But that claim will not bear a close examination by the light of any economical or moral standard. In its broader features it is copied from the last Irish Land Act, and breathes, like it, the spirit of class-legislation. If the application of the new law were to be prospective only, it would be open to none but economical objections; but, so far as it is retrospective, it would most unjustly enrich the present race of farmers at the expense of their landlords and their successors—not excluding labourers ambitious to become the possessors of farms. For every new tenant would of course have to pay a heavy valuation on entry, and would be all the less able to offer a fair rent. What pretence of justice can there be for thus burdening future occupiers for the exclusive benefit of present occupiers? How can a man who took a farm last year, at a certain rent, subject to a year's notice to quit, and with a full knowledge that his improvements might then become his landlord's property, honestly call upon the Legislature to convert these into his own property, and to give him the option of selling them or holding on at a judicial rent? However disguised, and however qualified, this means confiscation, and would soon be acknowledged as confiscation by the very class on whose behalf it is demanded, if it should ever be applied to cottages and gardens held of farmers by farm-labourers. It is the duty of the Legislature to resist such a claim as firmly as it would resist an equally plausible claim, on behalf of consumers, to restrict the price of farm

produce, or, on behalf of labourers, to fix a minimum rate of farm wages. It is certain that, before 1870, no English statesman or economist of repute would have entertained the idea for a moment. It is equally certain that, with the one ominous exception of the Irish Land Act, no precedent can be cited for so violent a disturbance of agricultural contracts from the legislation of modern Europe or America. In other countries, where the devolution of landed property is strictly prescribed by law, absolute freedom is allowed in agreements of tenancy, and existing contracts are held absolutely sacred. The French Code, which lays down certain rules of compensation, expressly authorises the parties to contract themselves out of its provisions, which they usually do. It would be strange indeed if England, the mother of Free Trade, and the stronghold of liberty against Communism, should be the first of civilised nations to adopt an agrarian code manifestly based on a communistic theory.

*STATE AND PROSPECTS OF BRITISH  
AGRICULTURE IN 1882*

‘Fraser’s Magazine,’ Feb. 1882

THIS article was mainly devoted to a detailed review of the Report just issued by the Royal Agricultural Commission, especially in regard to the effect on British Agriculture of bad seasons, combined with low prices, of foreign competition, of high rents, of increased rates directly levied from the occupier, of rising wages and less efficient labour, and of compulsory education; with remarks on suggested legislative reforms, including the prohibition of restrictive covenants in agricultural agreements, and the adoption of statutable Tenant-right. The following extracts may be of somewhat more general interest:—

THE Report of the Royal Agricultural Commission must needs disappoint any who may have expected from it a prescription of heroic remedies for agricultural depression. But it must also disappoint those who looked, at least, for an authoritative and decisive verdict on the great open questions affecting the tenure and occupation of land. Yet the Commissioners may, perhaps, be justified in recording their opinion that the condition of British agriculture has never been the subject of a ‘more comprehensive and laborious inquiry’ than that which they have conducted. They were appointed three years ago to consider and report, ‘with all convenient speed, upon the depressed condition of the agricultural interest, and the causes to which it is owing; whether those causes are of a permanent character, and how far they have been created or can be remedied by legislation.’ The Commission was strongly constituted, having the Duke of Richmond for its president, and containing able representatives of landowners and farmers, as well as men like Mr. Bonamy Price and Mr. Rodwell. It was

aided by Reports from Assistant Commissioners, who visited not only every district of Great Britain, but America and Canada, France, Holland, Belgium, and Denmark. The 'notes' issued as instructions for the guidance of these Assistant Commissioners were of a most elaborate and exhaustive character. The evidence taken before the Commissioners themselves is as voluminous as could be desired. Nevertheless, the ultimate result of their deliberations, prolonged over three years, is more than unsatisfactory. The Report, in fact, is miserably conceived, miserably arranged, miserably composed, and miserably edited. It ignores altogether many important topics directly connected with the subject of inquiry, and presents an extremely meagre review of those which it purports to discuss. It embodies no adequate, or even tolerable, digest of the materials so diligently collected, and her Majesty is virtually invited to ransack for herself the vast mass of information accumulated, but not analysed, by the Commissioners. Instead of a digest, we have a series of disjointed paragraphs and quotations, grouped together with little regard to logical sequence or literary symmetry, and often ending with no definite expression of opinion. The general impression left on the mind of the reader is that, after all their labour, the Commissioners felt themselves no wiser than before, and that, in their judgment, little or nothing can be done, by the State or by individuals, either to relieve agricultural depression in the present or to ward it off in the future.

The predominant influence of bad seasons on the late agricultural crisis being admitted on all sides, it was hardly necessary for the Commissioners to point out so emphatically that it could not have been prevented by legislative changes. 'Owners and occupiers have alike suffered from it. No description of estate or tenure has been exempted. The owner in fee and the life-tenant, the occupier, whether of large or of small holdings, whether under lease, or custom, or agreement, or the provisions of the Agricultural Holdings Act—all without distinction have been involved in a general calamity.'



The truth of this is self-evident, and the most strenuous advocate of agrarian reforms would not have expected disentailed estates or the plots of peasant-owners to be proof against floods and murrain, like the land of Goshen during the plagues of Egypt. Everyone, no doubt, 'suffered alike,' but it does not follow that everyone suffered equally, and it would have been interesting if the Report had enabled us to judge what classes of owners and occupiers were most successful in weathering the storm. There is reason to believe, for instance, that it pressed less heavily on farms of moderate size than on those of the largest and those of the smallest class. The explanation is simple and instructive. Farms of the largest class are very apt to be cultivated scientifically with borrowed capital, and though in good years they may yield ample returns, the levelling effect of a bad season tells specially against high farming, and leaves nothing out of which interest can be paid. Farms of the smallest class too often belong to men who, having little capital and no credit, are broken down by the loss on a single harvest. On the other hand, the occupier of a fifty-acre farm is more likely to have adequate capital of his own; he relies chiefly on his own labour and that of his family, thereby getting the benefit of high wages; his personal expenditure is on a humble scale; and, having little taste for scientific experiments, he escapes the ruinous losses, though he also loses the occasional profits, of these hazardous speculations. Had the Commissioners followed up this line of inquiry, they might perhaps have arrived at significant results. It may well be that a policy of agricultural consolidation, supposed to be justified by the analogy of manufactures, has been carried too far in Great Britain, and that it may be found profitable to break up of many of the largest farms into the smaller holdings out which they were but recently formed. At all events, this is a question which eminently deserves consideration, especially as a larger supply of farms requiring but moderate capital might keep in the country a great deal of agricultural skill and energy which now finds its way to America or Australia.

The proposal of indefeasible Tenant-right in respect of unexhausted improvements, and that of a rate or tax leviable on all classes of property for indoor relief, suffice to redeem this inquiry from the reproach of utter barrenness. But its practical value begins and ends with these proposals, for the suggestion of a limitation in time on the landlord's right of distraint was already familiar to all interested in agricultural politics. Assuredly the public had a right to expect far more helpful counsels from such a Commission after three years of meditation, and we cannot but attribute the reticence and hesitation of their Report to a strange dread of uttering home-truths unpalatable either to landlords or tenants. An agricultural treatise might well be written on topics of the first importance entirely omitted by the Commissioners, apparently under the influence of this motive. We have already seen how considerably landlords are spared painful allusions to the connection of agricultural distress with incumbrances under entails, with the rise of rent during periods of prosperity, and with defects in estate management. But at least equal tenderness is shown for the feelings of tenants; and no trustworthy judgment can be formed on the future of British agriculture without a violation of the reserve which the Commissioners have imposed upon themselves in regard to the shortcomings, not of labourers, but of farmers.

The Commissioners speak very lightly of market gardening and fruit-growing as auxiliary sources of profit to ordinary farmers; they are content to say of dairy-farming that it is beginning to be studied 'as possibly a profitable branch of agriculture;' and they seem to regard poultry-breeding and the production of eggs as beneath the dignity of agricultural science. Can they have been aware that nine or ten million hundredweights of potatoes alone, and no less than seven or eight hundred millions of eggs, are yearly imported into the United Kingdom? Had they realised that milk sent up from dairy-farms sixty or seventy miles distant is delivered carriage free at the London terminus for about 9*d.* a gallon, while it is sold to London consumers at 20*d.* a gallon, thus leaving a

profit of more than 100 per cent. on the last process of distribution? Did they ask themselves how skilful poultry-breeding can fail to yield a profit of full 100 per cent., seeing that fowls have at least doubled their retail price within the last forty years, while the cost of feeding them has slightly diminished? Had they dealt closely with such questions as these, they would soon have detected one main cause of agricultural depression, which, unhappily, bids fair to be 'permanent'—the gradual retirement of the working farmer and the managing farmer's wife before advancing civilisation.

The portentous growth of what may properly be called agricultural middlemen is at once a consequence and a proof of this marked change in the habits of farmers. The number of tenants may perhaps have been reduced by the consolidation of farms and the number of labourers by the substitution of machinery, but the number of persons making a living out of the land is far greater than it was in the olden times. Except the corn-dealer and the butcher, there was then hardly any intermediary between the cultivator and the consumer. The egg-dealer, the poultry-dealer, and the whole army of jobbers who now eat up the farmer's profits on milk, butter, and other articles of farm-produce, were then comparatively unknown. The farmer usually bred and reared, if he did not slaughter, his own cattle; his wife trudged or jogged to market with her own turkeys, chickens, butter, cheese, and eggs, on which she received the retail as well as the wholesale profit. A toll is now exacted at every stage between production and consumption, and it has even been stated on good authority that butter made in the county of Cork pays six or seven profits before it reaches the London householder's table. Of course, all this represents an immense saving of trouble to modern farmers, but it also represents a pecuniary loss, which, in the case of meat, greatly exceeds the effect of American competition. The sacrifice may be inevitable, but it certainly does not appear to be so; nor is it at all self-evident that, by a simple application of the co-operative principle, the farmers of a neighbourhood might

not employ a common salesman in London, and thus appropriate almost the whole benefit of London prices.

This brings into view another aspect of modern English farming to which equally little attention has been directed. The modern English farmer, occupying some two hundred acres or more, is essentially a superintendent rather than a husbandman, but in how many instances is he a trained and fully qualified superintendent of farm labour? And, if he be not, is not that a very costly system of agriculture which employs so large a class of overseers with no more than an empirical knowledge of their business? Let us suppose an area of ten thousand acres in the possession of one, or more than one, landlord; and let us suppose that a capital of some 80,000*l.* is required to cultivate it properly. That capital is now provided—if indeed it be provided—by some forty or fifty tenants, most of them with families, and each living at the rate of something like 1*l.* per acre. In other words, besides the 4,000*l.* a year which must be set aside as interest on capital at 5 per cent., the mere superintendence of this area costs 6,000*l.* a year. But it is at least worthy of consideration whether it might not be more efficiently superintended by one highly skilled manager with a salary of 1,000*l.* a year and ten foremen-labourers or bailiffs receiving less than 100*l.* a year apiece. The result would be that 4,000*l.* would be saved out of 6,000*l.*, and the land perhaps better cultivated after all. Though it would be very rash to speculate on the future development of our agricultural system, which depends on so many conditions beyond the sphere of economy, it is by no means improbable that arrangements of this kind may, at least, find a place in it. Nor would it be surprising if, side by side with farms thus managed on a grander scale, cottage farms, of which the Commissioners think so little, should become once more a characteristic feature of British agriculture. True it is, as the Report informs us, that *petite culture* has but slight chances of success except where there is ‘facility of railway carriage and proximity to great centres of population.’ But it so happens that most of Great Britain enjoys

these advantages in a greater degree than any country except Belgium, while the consumers of Great Britain are wealthier and more willing to pay high prices than any other consumers in the world.

Since this Report was signed, a more favourable season, and a more bountiful harvest, than we have enjoyed for some years past has once more revived the spirits of farmers. It is to be hoped that it will not obliterate from their minds the lessons taught by the long period of depression, or divert the attention of far-sighted agriculturists from the problems suggested, but not in any way solved, by the Report. 'The best hope for the prosperity of agriculture lies in the mutual confidence and friendly relations of the three classes directly engaged in it, and in the common conviction that their interests are inseparable.' No sentiment could be more praiseworthy in itself or more suitable for an agricultural dinner; but it may well excite a smile as the final outcome of a grave inquiry into the State and Prospects of British Agriculture. It would be far more opportune to impress upon farmers that 'the best hope for the prosperity of agriculture,' as of any other practical art, lies in the clear perception of the ever-changing conditions which must govern its success, and the rapid adaptation of means to ends. If gardeners had been as much creatures of routine as farmers, we should miss all the finest varieties of flowers and fruits which now constitute the glory of British horticulture. That very tripartite system of agriculture, which is tacitly assumed in the Report to be an immutable ordinance of nature or Providence, is scarcely known in America, is exceptional in many parts of Europe, and must be regarded as on its trial in Great Britain itself. Lord Beaconsfield may have been right in asserting that land worth cultivating at all must needs yield three profits, but it makes a great difference whether these profits are all received by one, two, or three classes; and if by two or three, in what proportions they are allotted. The great aim of agricultural reformers should be, not to uproot the existing system, which would be quite as

unreasonable as to stereotype it, but to secure the utmost possible freedom of expansion for such modifications of ownership and tenure as future circumstances may dictate. The hierarchy of landlord, tenant-farmer, and labourer will continue long, and perhaps for ever, to be distinctive of our rural economy. But it is probable that, in the agrarian constitution of the future, peasant-proprietorship, and farmer-proprietorship, co-operative farming and cottage-farming, will prevail over a far larger area than at present. The English land system, as we see it, is not so much a spontaneous growth as an artificial creation, and it has been moulded not so much by skilful farmers, studying the interests of agriculture, as by skilful lawyers and land-agents studying interests of an entirely different nature. When English landowners, as a body, cease to be almost sleeping partners, and bring to bear on the business of cultivation the same intelligence and energy which are the life of British manufactures, there will be less need for appointing fresh Agricultural Commissions, and, if they should be appointed, their Reports will probably breathe a far less desponding spirit.

III

ECONOMICAL POLITICS





*THE PROGRESS OF DEMOCRACY IN ENGLAND*

'The Nineteenth Century,' November 1883

It is now more than seventeen years since Lord Sherbrooke, then Mr. Lowe, warned his countrymen against the perils of advancing Democracy, in the most remarkable series of parliamentary speeches delivered within living memory. In opposing the very moderate Reform Bill then under discussion, he assumed that every downward extension of the franchise was 'a step in the direction of Democracy,' and he proceeded to construct a hideous ideal of Democracy, by combining all the worst features of ancient city governments with all the worst features of modern empires, republics, and colonial legislatures in which universal suffrage prevails. He described this imaginary Democracy as tyrannical at home and aggressive abroad, the enemy of all superiority, and the slave of every selfish prejudice. He pictured to himself the so-called 'degradation of the suffrage' as inevitably involving a degradation of politics, and constantly lowering the standard of political morality. He maintained that if once the ignorant majority should become omnipotent, it would forthwith use its power to crush the educated minority, while it would prostitute itself before the flattery of demagogues and the bribes of millionaires. He foretold that democratic constituencies would assuredly return members of inferior character and intellect, little guided by public spirit or fixed principles, intolerant of administrative vigour in the Executive, and even of judicial independence on the Bench, obeying the caprices of popular sentiment, and incapable of appreciating a truly statesmanlike policy.

The year after these gloomy predictions were uttered, a 'degradation' of the suffrage beyond that which Mr. Lowe had

denounced was effected by a Conservative Ministry, and votes were given to all ratepaying householders in boroughs, as well as to a limited number of lodgers. We have now had some fifteen years' experience of this democratic franchise, and the sentiments of the new voters have been tested by three general elections. For a while, the apparent results of the change were such as to disappoint both the hopes of its advocates and the fears of its opponents. The Parliament of 1868 contained a strong Liberal majority, and carried several great measures which Lord Palmerston would probably have never introduced, even if the old constituencies would have backed their members in supporting them. But the reformed House of Commons differed little from its predecessors in personal composition, nor could any specially democratic tone be detected in its debates. In 1874 there was a reaction. The Parliament of that year was the most Conservative that had been elected for a whole generation, and the majority, instead of blindly seeking instructions from their constituents, yielded an almost passive obedience to Lord Beaconsfield. Still, the growing desire to conciliate the working classes made itself felt in such enactments as the Artisans and Labourers' Dwellings Act, while the action taken by Mr. Gladstone on the Eastern Question gave the first serious impulse to democratic interference with the conduct of foreign affairs. It is true that shopkeepers rather than labouring men crowded the indignation-meetings called to condemn the Bulgarian atrocities; it is perhaps true, also, that most of those who attended them were as ignorant of the real issues at stake as the working-class deputation which besought Lord Palmerston to espouse the cause of Poland, under the impression that it was a democratic cause. Still, the fact remains that great mass-meetings were then, for the first time, urged by the first of English statesmen to take foreign policy under their own control, to drown the voice of Parliament, and to force the hand of the Government by a virtual *plébiscite*. The lesson has not been lost on the English, or on the Irish people. Thenceforward, Parliament

has commanded less reverence in the eyes of the nation, and the same machinery which prevented Lord Beaconsfield from defending the integrity of the Turkish Empire was promptly set in motion to defeat Mr. Gladstone's own convention with M. de Lesseps respecting the Suez Canal.

The general election of 1880 was the sequel of his bold appeal to democratic sentiment, and a genuine expression of that sentiment. Whatever other influences may have contributed to swell the Liberal majority, and whether or not the enthusiasm then kindled has been justified by the event, the verdict returned by the constituencies in 1880 was a thoroughly popular and honest verdict—a democratic protest of the national conscience and common-sense against what most of the electors regarded as an immoral and reactionary statecraft. This verdict may possibly be reversed at the next election; personal and sectional discontents may again dissolve the cohesive power of Liberal principles and party spirit; the Irish legislation of 1881 and 1882 may prove to have alienated a considerable body of powerful Whigs; the Egyptian War and the moderation of the Government on certain domestic questions may have cost the confidence of many extreme Radicals; the Affirmation Bill may be remembered against it in Scotland; Mr. Gladstone may retire and leave no successor capable of rallying an united Liberal Party; the extension of household suffrage to counties may be relegated, after all, to a new Parliament. But all this, even if it restore the Conservatives to office, will not arrest the steady progress of Democracy in England; for that progress is independent of party vicissitudes, and is part of a secular movement which no statesmanship can do much to accelerate or to retard.

I. It is high time, however, to ask ourselves what is meant by that progress of Democracy which all recognise, and which is tacitly assumed in the current language of politics. In what sense, if any, is England becoming every day more democratic? The answer, though simple, cannot be embraced within the limits of a legal definition. ‘Demo-

cracy,' or the rule of the people, is not a name for any particular form of government; it denotes a political and social force which may underlie almost any form of government. No doubt this force operates most naturally and powerfully through republican institutions; but there may be republican institutions without Democracy, and Democracy without republican institutions. The last French Empire was founded on a *plébiscite*, and even under the restored monarchy Democracy in France was described by Royer Collard as 'running with a full stream'; so profoundly democratic has French public opinion become ever since the Revolution. On the other hand, the ascendancy of privilege and authority—the principles of which Democracy is the negation—has seldom been more oppressive than under the earlier republic of Rome and the mediæval republic of Venice. Neither of these Republics could have stood the crucial test of a *plébiscite*. Cromwell, who could not even keep the peace with a free Parliament, would assuredly never have submitted the fate of his own republican Commonwealth to such a test; and, if anything in history be certain, it is certain that the Restoration of Charles II. was the expression of an essentially popular revolt against the austere and intolerant reign of Puritanism, conducted under republican forms. It is the absolute supremacy of the popular will over all other powers in the State that constitutes a perfectly democratic government, as it is the abolition of all social distinctions that constitutes a perfectly democratic state of society. Where these conditions are more and more nearly realised in any community, that community is growing more democratic, whatever be its constitutional machinery; and it is in this sense that we may properly speak of the progress of Democracy in England.

At first sight, indeed, the contrast between such an indirect rule of the people as is gaining strength in England and the direct rule of the people which prevailed in the more democratic republics of Greece and Italy, is so violent as almost to repel the idea of analogy. Let us take, for example, the

graphic picture of Athenian Democracy in its golden age drawn by Mr. Freeman in one of his historical essays. In this typical Greek Democracy, all power, legislative, executive, and judicial, was concentrated in the sovereign assembly of the people, where every citizen had an equal vote. The Senate, and even the Courts of Justice, were mere committees of this assembly, and held to be animated by the same passions; Archons and Generals were mere executors of its will. No division of powers was attempted.

'Dêmos was himself King, Minister, and Parliament. He had his smaller officials to carry out the necessary details of public business, but he was most undoubtedly his own First Lord of the Treasury, his own Foreign Secretary, his own Secretary for the Colonies. He himself kept up a personal correspondence both with foreign potentates and with his own officers on foreign service; . . . he gave personal audience to the ambassadors of other States, and clothed his own with just so great or so small a share as he deemed good of his own boundless authority. . . . He was his own Lord High Chancellor, his own Lord Primate, his own Commander-in-Chief. He listened to the arguments of Kleôn on behalf of a measure, and to the arguments of Nicias against it, and he ended by bidding Nicias to go and carry out the proposal which he had denounced as extravagant or unjust. He listened with approval to his own "explanations"; he passed votes of confidence in his own policy; he advised himself to give his own royal assent to the Bills which he had himself passed, without the form of a second or third reading, or the vain ceremony of moving that the Prytaneis do leave their chairs.'

It is self-evident that Democracy of this Athenian type could only be developed in an urban community which also constituted a nation, and which had one and the same word for the 'city' and the 'State.' A city mob, clothed with executive functions, could not possibly govern the United Kingdom or the British Empire, however gifted the race of which its citizens might have sprung, and there is, happily,

less prospect of the experiment being tried, since the institution of representative government—the most beneficent of all political discoveries—has enabled the many to rule through the agency of the few. The Democracy which is steadily advancing in England, though similar in its real tendency, is entirely different in outward character, and essentially modern in its origin. It may be traced with confidence to a variety of definite general causes, three of which are worthy of special notice.

1. One of these, clearly indicated by M. de Lavéleye, is the effect of mechanical inventions on civilisation. The invention of printing alone has done more to break down class-barriers and democratise society than all the efforts of social reformers in ancient and modern times. When books were manuscripts, and each of them cost months or years of labour to produce, the perusal of them was practically the monopoly of priests, monks, and philosophers, from whom the rest of mankind were content to borrow their ideas. Even in the last century, when there were plenty of books, indeed, but hardly any newspapers in England, criticism on the management of public affairs, and especially of foreign affairs, was practically confined within a narrow circle of readers, scarcely to be numbered by tens of thousands, and mostly concentrated in London. Swift's 'Conduct of the Allies' and the 'Letters of Junius' had, doubtless, a prodigious coffee-house circulation, and were probably devoured by a few hundred amateur politicians, male and female, in the long and dreary evenings which followed the early dinners in those country-houses which Fielding and others have portrayed so vividly. But for the instruction of the people at large such circulation was as nothing compared with that of any one among the many leading newspapers, metropolitan and provincial, which now collectively number their readers by millions. Whether they be chiefly regarded as forming, or as reflecting, popular opinion, these journals have created a healthy community of political ideas between the people and the so-called governing classes. Instead of looking upon statesmanship as an occult

science, the humblest elector or non-electer who can read now feels himself almost taken into the councils of the Cabinet, and, however conscious of ignorance, finds his political judgment treated with respect by Parliament and the Press.

2. A no less powerful democratic force is the ever-increasing facility of locomotion. When labourers in the country lived and died under the shadow of their parish churches, never travelling beyond the nearest market town, and when even artisans seldom migrated from their native cities, being rooted there by custom as well as by the old law of 'settlement,' the power of combination remained dormant, and labour never measured its strength against capital except under an extreme sense of oppression. In these days, the labourer changes his residence as freely as the capitalist, no longer tramping on foot, but conveyed by the same train as his employer, while the spirit of Trades-Unionism, aided by this very cause, associates him with all his fellow-labourers throughout Europe and America. The constant tide of emigration setting towards the United States and the colonies, where society is equally democratic, reacts upon Great Britain itself, and introduces democratic ideas into families which, in the last generation, accepted without a murmur the paternal despotism of the squire and the parson. In becoming less stationary, the working classes are daily becoming more independent, and, in becoming more independent, they inevitably become a more important factor in the social and political community. Meanwhile Democracy, under these influences, is gradually assuming a more cosmopolitan character. National costumes have well-nigh disappeared in Europe, national prejudices are sensibly weakened, the dictates of national patriotism are often checked by sympathies of class or creed fostered by special organs of the Press; and the statesman has sometimes to count, not only with the demands of national, but also with those of international, Democracy.

3. A third cause of democratic progress, which few can desire to arrest, is the spread of popular education. The

Reformation, which is the real fountain-head of modern democratic ideas, gave the first impulse to this educational movement, as it also stamped with a religious sanction the aspirations of social equality. The democratic influence of Protestantism is perhaps most clearly marked in Scotland, where Presbyterian church government and the system of parish schools were established together by the authority of John Knox. No doubt, the political effects of that system have been partly intensified and partly tempered by other conditions, such as the survival of the old clan spirit, and the natural energy which has pushed members of the poorest Scotch families into the highest positions in Church or State. Still, it is the general diffusion of education during the last three centuries, and the association of all classes in common schools, which have mainly contributed to develop the sturdy yet sober character of Scotch Democracy. An exact contrast is furnished by the experience of Ireland, where Democracy is travestied by anarchy and terrorism, utterly inconsistent with the manly self-reliance of free citizens, and where the democratic sentiment of social equality is almost entirely wanting. Had wiser counsels prevailed in the reign of Elizabeth, and had national schools been planted all over Ireland as they were in Scotland, it is quite certain that Irishmen, Catholics as they mostly are, would now be far more democratic in temper, and probable that they would be far more loyal subjects. As for England, it is hardly too much to say that democratic tendencies date from the extension of popular education. Such outbreaks as the Lord George Gordon riots in the last century, or the Luddite riots in the early part of this century, were in no sense democratic movements, but mere ebullitions of fanaticism and prejudice. Even the fierce spirit of class-hatred which inspired the Chartists, and survives in the pages of 'Alton Locke,' was not truly democratic, but essentially sectional and sectarian in its nature. This spirit has not been extinguished in England, but it has been sensibly modified by the progressive community of ideas between all classes which it is the special



mission of education to propagate, and which is specially characteristic of true Democracy. In an educated population like that of the United States, the conflict of races, of parties, or of commercial interests, may be as bitter as possible, but class-antipathies can never become internecine, because there are no permanent divisions of classes, and because all citizens have a common stock of ideas.

4. But the operation of these and other general causes in furthering Democracy has been favoured by a negative condition which has not received sufficient attention. This condition is the internal decay of those forces which are essentially antagonistic to Democracy—Privilege, Authority, and Individuality. It is not only that Privilege, entrenched behind natural and artificial barriers, has been reduced to impotence by the destruction of these barriers; or that Authority, assuming a divine right to command, has been met by a revolt of human reason; or that Individuality has been weakened by the gravitation of modern life towards social, if not intellectual, equality. It is, also, that faith in any principles whatever has been impaired by the influence of that prevailing scepticism which has shaken religious belief, and penetrated into every other department of thought. Not many generations have elapsed since Englishmen were content to brave torture or the stake rather than subscribe to some abstruse formula about the mysteries of religion which modern casuistry would cynically accept as unmeaning and therefore harmless. These men had the courage of their convictions, but it is vain to expect the courage of their convictions from men who have no deep and fixed convictions, such as sustained the martyrs of old. Three centuries ago an Englishman of like passions with ourselves would give his body to be burned rather than affirm or deny transubstantiation or the royal supremacy; it is now considered an almost heroic feat, as it is certainly a very rare feat, of political constancy for an English politician to refuse a seat in Parliament, or give up office, rather than assent to measures which he privately condemns. Thus it happens that when once the

popular will has declared itself, or is supposed to have declared itself—often on very slight evidence—it meets with no resisting power. If any one is found strong enough to stand against the stream, believing some things to be intrinsically right and others intrinsically wrong, he is stigmatised as ‘weak-kneed’ by his more pliable fellows, who have no earnest convictions at all, and thenceforth passes for a theorist or crotcheteer. In a word, that which in France is called ‘opportunism,’ has become the guiding law of modern politics, and opportunism is but another name for subservience to democratic absolutism.

II. To enumerate all the symptoms of democratic progress in England would be a hopeless task, while some of them might be treated with equal propriety as causes. Of course, the most obvious instance of a change resulting, in part, from democratic pressure and contributing to strengthen that pressure, is the adoption of household suffrage, with the ballot, in borough constituencies. The effect of this change is felt in every borough election and in every parliamentary debate; it has been the chief motive power in most subsequent reforms, and the chief agent in the political education of the people. Bearing this in mind, we may, however, find it more instructive to observe those less patent signs of our own times which most clearly indicate the course of the democratic movement in this generation, and its probable direction in the next.

1. Foremost among these must be mentioned the almost universal recognition of Promotion by Merit as the rule which should govern the whole public service, both civil and military. An exclusive, or at least a preferential claim, to fill the higher offices of the State, is a typical peculiarity of aristocracies. The old Roman patricians bore with tolerable patience other encroachments on their privileges, but they denounced the opening of the great executive magistracies to plebeians as an insult to the gods themselves. The same notion is by no means extinct in Germany, and even in this country, but thirty years ago, the admission of candidates to

the Civil Service and (still more) to the Army by competitive examination was justly resented as the thin edge of the democratic wedge. This is not the place to review the gradual triumph of the new system, which has naturally kept pace with the development of education. Much remains to be done before it can truly be said that eminent ability, combined with force of character, will enable its possessor to attain success in England, but enough has been done to give the masses a salutary assurance that no door of preferment is now closed against them. There are probably few villages from which some labourer's son has not been raised to a higher station by his own capacity; there is certainly no college in the universities where students who have risen from the ranks do not mix with young men of superior birth and wealth; and within the next thirty years this healthy process of natural selection cannot fail to leaven the whole upper grade of English society.

2. Another striking evidence—as it is also a cause—of democratic progress is the rapid multiplication of new elective bodies for purposes of local government since the Reform Act of 1832. The local institutions of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers were democratic enough, and even now there is perhaps less of popular self-government in country districts than there was for centuries before, and for some time after, the Norman conquest. But there is far more than there was in the last century, or even in the early part of the present century, when the whole conduct of county business and parochial affairs was legally or actually in the hands of magistrates nominated by the Crown. The successive creation of elective Town Councils, Boards of Guardians, Highway Boards, Sanitary Boards, and School Boards, represents so many important changes in the reconstruction of popular self-government. Hitherto the working classes have taken much less interest in local than in parliamentary elections, but their interest is yearly increasing, and in the meantime a far more practical concern for their well-being is shown by local governing bodies. A notable feature of this democratic

revival in local government is the growing popularity of Permissive Bills, to be applied at the discretion of the local authorities. A similar tendency in ecclesiastical politics is shown in the congregationalist movement, which has strangely allied itself with the ritualistic movement within the State Church itself. The very contrary was anticipated by De Tocqueville, who predicted a sacrifice of local, no less than of individual, independence to centralisation in England, as elsewhere, on the ground that all Democracies crave for uniformity in administration, and that central governments are only too ready to grant it because it saves them all the trouble of studying local requirements. He little foresaw the democratic counter-currents which have brought about the demand for Home Rule in Ireland, and for the settlement of great questions, like the liquor traffic, by a local *plébiscite*. Probably he was misled by a confusion between the love of equality and the love of uniformity, possibly he did not allow enough for the English preference of liberty to equality; at all events, experience shows that democratic forces in this country do not set entirely in the direction of centralisation.

3. There is another sense, however, in which the intervention of the central government is being more and more involved to compass democratic ends. The mass of the people have discovered that a resort to imperial legislation and the powerful machinery of imperial administration is the shortest and readiest method of getting a public benefit secured or a public abuse redressed. Hence the measures which have placed the Poor Law and National Education and Charitable Endowments under the superintendence of a central board; which have transferred the management of County Gaols to the Home Office; which have brought Factories, Mines, Shipping and Emigration, more or less, under the control of Government Departments; which have established National Savings Banks, and which have charged the State with the duty of guarding the health not only of British citizens, but of British cattle. Democratic centralisation of this kind is sometimes quite legitimate, and implies no vulgar jealousy

of local independence. Most of the functions now assigned to central boards can be discharged more efficiently and with less waste of power by such boards than by local authorities, and would long ago have been thus assigned had not the people mistrusted a central executive mainly conducted by the Crown and the aristocracy. Since the central executive has come to reflect the will of the people, there is no longer any motive for this jealousy, and the people find it convenient to superintend many of their own affairs through officials in Downing Street.

But it is vain to conceal from ourselves that democratic centralisation has another source in the wide diffusion of socialistic ideas. This is the most formidable symptom of democratic progress, as it is also the most novel. No essential connection exists between Socialism and democratic institutions. Great inequalities of fortune were tolerated in the Greek and Italian republics, and seem to excite little jealousy in the United States. There vast capitals are often amassed by plundering the public, while the very simplicity of domestic life favours accumulation, yet there is little trace of socialistic legislation. In England, on the contrary, the principle of Socialism was introduced into legislation by the Poor Law long before democratic forces were in the ascendant. Socialism is not a product of Democracy, but modern Socialism and modern Democracy are both fostered, to some extent, by the same industrial conditions. A very lucid explanation of this fact is given by M. de Laveleye in his admirable essay on 'Democracy and Political Economy.' He there shows how the same economical causes which promote social equality also give birth to hostility between masters and workmen. In proportion as machinery facilitates the organisation of industry on the grandest scale, and cheapens necessaries as well as luxuries, it widens and deepens the gulf which separates capital from labour. The caste-like immobility of classes which prevailed in the Middle Ages has passed away with serfdom, trade privileges, and the regulation of wages by custom or Act of Parliament; but the unlimited competition

which has succeeded it has introduced a struggle for existence unknown in the olden times.

‘This general competition is the cause of all progress, the mainspring of industrial activity, the source of our power; but it produces, too, an incessant agitation, a permanent restlessness, an universal sense of instability. No one is content with his lot; no one is sure of to-morrow. The rich man desires to accumulate more riches; he who lives by labour trembles for his very livelihood. . . . Economical progress has emancipated artisans from all disabilities; it has rescued them from the bonds of trade-guilds; it has raised their wages and improved their condition; but, at the same time, it forms them into a class by themselves, massing them in vast bodies into enormous factories and fixed centres; it has given them new wants, and it has exposed them, without protection or security, to all the fluctuations of business, so often turned upside-down by the revolutions of industry, the crises of trade, and the stagnation of the markets.’

Yet the franchise must be extended to all.

‘You give the power of choosing legislators, and so of making laws, to men who have no property, and whose wages are inevitably forced downwards to a minimum representing the bare necessaries of life. You proclaim a legal equality, and the actual inequality which continues to exist causes more suffering, and becomes more irritating than ever.’

The immense circulation of Mr. Henry George’s ‘Progress and Poverty’ is an instructive commentary on these words, published five years ago. It is true that Socialism has little hold in the United States, and is directly at variance with the best tendencies of Democracy, but it is zealously advocated by the democratic Press in Europe, and is likely to be stimulated by the advance of Democracy in England for many years to come.

Though Socialistic ideas have taken deeper root on the Continent than in England, it is to be feared that England has special reason to guard against their propagation. The greatest weakness of party government, as it exists in this

country, is the proneness of one party to bid against the other for democratic support, and it would not be difficult to show how many benevolent measures, containing the germ of Socialism, have recently owed their origin to this fatal competition. Of these, by far the most important and disastrous is the Irish Land Act of 1881. If the progress of Democracy should involve further and further applications of that evil precedent to agrarian and commercial relations, the national character will assuredly become demoralised; State protection will usurp the place of self-help, and in the vain attempt to redress inequality by Act of Parliament we may end by quenching that spirit of liberty to which England owes so much, not only of its present greatness, but of its capacity for a truly democratic civilisation.

4. A fourth and more hopeful symptom of advancing Democracy is the far more active and intelligent part taken in elections by the mass of the people, who in too many boroughs had been passive material in the hands of self-elected committees, or cliques of local busybodies. The so-called Caucus system is rather the expression than the cause of this activity, which is shown in the greater frequency of political meetings, and even in the curious growth of mimic Parliaments on the model of the House of Commons. But the Caucus system has assuredly done much to stimulate and to consolidate democratic organisation, giving a new political life to some of our more sluggish constituencies. In this it has been purely beneficial; it is mischievous so far as it tends to crush out personal independence and converts the representative into the mere delegate. It is one thing for the numerical majority of electors to claim the right of choosing a candidate for themselves, and of ascertaining that his general views are in harmony with their own; it is another to insist on dictating his vote on each particular measure, thereby annulling the grand advantage of representative government. Happily, this abuse of the Caucus system is likely to be checked by the natural good sense and independence of Englishmen; meanwhile, the system itself is, at

least, a proof of a healthy democratic interest in national politics.

5. But the influence of democratic tendencies is equally manifest within the walls of Parliament itself. Lord Palmerston was not far wrong in surmising that, if the franchise were lowered, the actors of the political drama would probably remain much the same as before, but that they would play to the gallery, instead of to the pit and boxes. Several men of rough democratic fibre have forced their way into the House of Commons, but on the whole birth and wealth seem to hold their own in the open market of electioneering. The difference is that every question is discussed with a special regard for the claims and feelings of the million, sometimes verging upon undisguised popularity-hunting. Hence the protectionist spirit which has reappeared in Parliamentary debates. Whether it be the grievances of the Highland crofters, or the extension of polling hours to suit the convenience of labourers, or the abolition of imprisonment for debt, or Sunday closing, or any other subject which touches working-class sympathies, a sensitive anxiety is now shown to propitiate the poorest voters which used to be reserved for the prejudices of territorial aristocracy and commercial plutocracy. The same tender solicitude for the comfort of the many, as against the privileges of the few, may be traced even in such comparatively trifling matters as the recent erection of street-refuges for the security of foot-passengers, and recent arrangements for the more popular enjoyment of royal parks. This deference to 'Demos,' as Aristophanes called it, may be carried, as we have seen, to socialistic extremes, but it is often dictated by motives not far removed from that paramount concern for the greatest happiness of the greatest number which ought to be the first rule of statesmanship. There is a striking passage in Mr. Trevelyan's 'Early Days of Charles James Fox,' where he shows how intense is the sentiment of oligarchical freemasonry, and how closely it is brought home to each member of such an exclusive society as then governed England. Sometimes an honest statesman might be sup-



ported by this sentiment against the *civium ardor prava jubentium* ; but, in the main, it must surely be safer and better for politicians to rely, as they now must, on the good opinion, not of a caste or a class, but of a much larger public, almost co-extensive with the nation.

6. On the other hand, we cannot expect the same delicacy or sense of honour from those who are studying to please small tradespeople, artisans, and day-labourers, as from those who obey the unwritten code of cultivated and refined circles. The experience of ancient Greece and Rome proves that chivalry may attain perfection under a republican government, but it certainly does not flourish nowadays in an atmosphere of social equality, or among persons chiefly engaged in mercantile competition. *Noblesse oblige* is a maxim which finds no response in the *bourgeoisie* or the *prolétariat*. Hence the admitted decline of gentlemanlike feeling and manners in the House of Commons which Mr. Bright has not shrunk from pointing out, and which is most conspicuous in a large section of the Irish members. We are bluntly warned by a Radical publicist that the House of Commons *must* 'become the worst club in London, if it is to be a faithful mirror of popular political sentiment,' and the remark is too forcibly confirmed by the example of the American and colonial legislatures. In this country the name of gentleman is still held in honour, but conduct unworthy of a gentleman is no longer condemned as it used to be by the House of Commons itself, and public opinion is not in advance of Parliamentary sentiment. Indeed, it appears that vulgarity of tone is rather aggravated in England by that fierce light of publicity, gathered into a focus by 'society papers,' which now beats, not on thrones only, but on every transaction of private life. This is among the least amiable symptoms of democratic progress, but it is, unhappily, not the least characteristic.

III. Such being the general causes, and the chief symptoms, of democratic progress, we have to consider what attitude a far-sighted statesman ought to assume towards

it, apart from the view which he may adopt on particular articles of the democratic programme. And, first, let us dismiss once for all the absurd and unworthy notion that Democracy must be welcomed because, forsooth, its progress is decreed by Political Necessity. No illusion has been so potent or so mischievous in its effect on statesmanship as this metaphysical bugbear, peculiar to modern thought, of Political Necessity. The ancients held that man was often the sport of a cruel Destiny, but that Destiny was supposed to be superhuman, and was practically excluded from their calculations. It has been reserved for modern political philosophers to cower before a destiny of their own invention—an idol which is created by public opinion in its own image, and of which those who bow down to it individually form a part. If people had but the nerve to brave the consequences of defying a destiny of this kind, and acting on the far sounder belief that 'man is man, and master of his fate,' it would often turn out that what had been mistaken for an irresistible stream of Political Necessity was nothing but a movement got up by a small band of *doctrinaires*, and capable of being stopped by a very moderate display of energy and self-sacrifice. If, then, such were the character of the democratic movement in England, if it depended for its success mainly upon those imaginary laws of Nature which are really within human control, it would be the duty of a true statesman to confront it boldly, and, should it appear mischievous, to oppose it vigorously.

If, on the other hand, we have rightly interpreted the origin of this movement, we shall be compelled to recognise it as really irresistible in the political sense. It is irresistible in that sense, because it springs inevitably from causes, outside the sphere of politics, which have broken down the old barriers separating nations and classes, sapped the convictions which upheld privilege and authority, revived, though in a worldlier form, the sense of common brotherhood first proclaimed by the Gospel, and opened up the vision of a higher comfort and culture for the toiling and suffering masses

of mankind. No one pretends that it is possible to arrest the development of mechanical invention, of locomotion, of trade, or even of education, and, unless the development of these forces can be arrested, the march of Democracy cannot be arrested. The existing Parliament may refuse the franchise to agricultural labourers, but it cannot prevent agricultural labourers becoming more intelligent or more independent; they must be enfranchised sooner or later, or their discontent will be a serious political danger, and, if they be enfranchised too late, the impulse given to Democracy will be all the greater. It was for this reason that De Tocqueville justly regarded the progress of Democracy as inevitable. He saw in it a political and social tendency inherent in the growth of modern civilisation, and he wisely set himself, not to preach against it, but to study its probable operation.

It does not follow, however, that because the progress of Democracy may be inevitable, in England as elsewhere, it is therefore an unmixed benefit, still less that nothing can be done to direct it. A true friend of Democracy as it ought to be will not shut his eyes to the vices of Democracy as it is. He will not fail to observe that, in destroying many superstitions and prejudices, it has put nothing in their place, and has encouraged a contempt for experience which bodes ill for the stability of democratic policy. Whatever his confidence in the people if left to follow their own convictions, he will not ignore the risk of their falling a prey to the arts of politicians trading upon their weaknesses and pandering to their passions. He may see reason to hope that Jack Cade would now fail to impose upon an audience of English working men, but he would not trust every constituency to reject Jack Cade's doctrines clothed in a socialist garb, and he knows that candidates of infamous character have been the chosen favourites of the populace, not only in America and the colonies, but much nearer home. Whether or not he deploras the visible decay of dogmatic faith among the masses in Great Britain, he cannot but apprehend that a people which no longer feared God might cease to regard man, and that unrestrained self-

ishness, rather than universal zeal for the public good, might result from a democratic regeneration of English society.

It is right that all these misgivings should be laid to heart by those who appreciate, and aspire to guide, the progress of Democracy in England. But it would be very wrong to let them obscure our view of those more favourable omens which justify, not political optimism, but a cheerful and courageous acceptance of the inevitable. Let us freely admit the besetting dangers and temptations of Democracy, but let us not forget the dangers and temptations which Democracy counteracts. If we must needs mistrust democratic ideas of economical justice, what shall we say of that system of taxation which, for want of democratic pressure, was the curse of France before the Revolution; and what of the Corn Laws and other commercial abuses which prevailed in this country until they were swept away by democratic pressure? Subservience to mobs tends, no doubt, to lower the standard of political morality, but is subservience to courts less demoralising; and were members of Parliament, after all, more high-minded in the lifetime of Sir Robert Walpole, when there was no Democracy to flatter? Many small, and some large, constituencies are doubtless tainted with corruption, but do not the vast majority of electors vote honestly; and is not even the servile and venal residuum almost as pure as the select bodies which monopolised borough elections in the olden times? The democratic Press of our own day may not be as moderate or scrupulous as we could desire, but can it be said that modern English journalism, as a whole, compares unfavourably with the coarse pamphleteering literature of which Swift and Junius produced the choicest specimens; and have not the organs of sound political information been multiplied a hundred- or thousand-fold since the people have begun to read newspapers? These are not irrelevant questions; they bear directly on the past history of democratic progress, which is the most trustworthy basis for a forecast of its future tendencies. The prospect of liberty so ample as that which Englishmen now enjoy would have alarmed timid

reformers of the last century quite as much as the prospect of greater political and social equality alarms those of the present age. Yet England, notwithstanding the much greater scale and complexity of its national life, is practically much easier to govern at this moment than it was in the evil days of court intrigue and parliamentary bribery. It was easier to govern after the Reform Act of 1832 than before it, and it became easier still after the Reform Act of 1867. Why should we doubt that future generations of English statesmen will learn to weather the admitted perils of advancing Democracy as skilfully as their fathers weathered the perils of personal government and oligarchy, or that a new order of political virtues will be developed under new social conditions?

One thing is certain, that it requires a more thorough political training, and a larger range of political knowledge, to lead a democratic nation and an almost despotic House of Commons, than it did to govern England as Walpole and Pitt governed it. The business then conducted by departments of State was comparatively simple, and a patrician Minister of no extraordinary capacity might well appear to stand a head and shoulders above the people, when so few took an active part in public affairs, and political life was still a close profession. Unless democratic progress is accompanied by a constant growth in the political education of statesmen, government will assuredly become weaker and weaker to control popular impulses, and popular impulses, however genuine, can never be a safe regulator even of domestic policy, much less of imperial policy, so long as the masses are mainly engrossed by manual labour, and ignorant of nearly all that it concerns a statesman to know. Mr. Bright is fond of telling us that 'the people have no interest in wrong.' This is true, but it is equally true that mankind has no interest in vice or error. If human nature could be trusted to understand and pursue its own highest interests, without instruction or guidance, this world would indeed be a paradise, and we might do well to welcome the substitution

of *plébiscites* for responsible government. Unhappily, it is far otherwise, and the future of Democracy mainly depends on the willingness of the omnipotent people to be led by highly-trained and conscientious statesmen, on the future supply of such leaders, and on their willingness to serve the people upon such terms as Democracy will accept.

Now, it may be fairly urged that, in proportion as the suffrage is extended and the governing classes recruited from below, the choice of materials for statesmanship will be increased, while the statesman will derive increased assistance from intelligent criticism. The men who now attain Cabinet office cannot be presumed to be the ablest politicians that Great Britain can produce, but only the ablest or most successful of those with leisure enough, fortune enough, and local interest enough to find seats in Parliament and force themselves into the front ranks. The progress of Democracy will open a larger field of selection, but will the multitude of electors avail themselves of it, choose the best candidates, and support the wisest statesmen? This is a question on which no prudent man will offer a confident opinion, for here the results of English experience materially differ from the lesson taught by the experience of America and the Australian colonies.

Hitherto, in this country, there have been few signs of a reluctance among men of high culture and social position to venture out on the open sea of politics, and not many signs of a reluctance in great popular constituencies to accept or even to prefer men of this type, when they can be induced to come forward. If such men are sometimes deterred from offering themselves, it is not so much by the display or the fear of democratic jealousy as by the covert opposition of short-sighted and self-seeking wirepullers, who delight to honour the plausible money-maker, perhaps equally destitute of public spirit or political capacity, since they have no other ideal of merit than success, and no other ideal of success than self-aggrandisement. No doubt, rich candidates sometimes buy seats by corrupting poor electors, but they have to con-

duct their corrupt practices in secret, and an Act has just been passed, with the hearty approval of the public, which cannot fail to hinder corrupt practices in future. No doubt, great popular audiences will always be prone to follow demagogues, and to be unduly swayed by rhetorical ability, but English demagogues seldom venture to court popularity by appeals to base passions or sentiments, and the larger the constituency, the higher, as a rule, is the general tone of electioneering speeches. Moreover, English society is not stratified in horizontal layers; nor do the working classes form a solid phalanx or mystic brotherhood swayed by one imperious will. The better they are known, the more they are found to comprise an infinite variety of interests, habits, and opinions, among which strong patriotic and Conservative instincts are by no means wanting. If we looked to Great Britain alone, we might be tempted to await the progress of Democracy with little anxiety, and to rely on the extension of national education as an adequate security against any risk involved in a further extension of the suffrage. But at this point we are rudely confronted with the experience of America and our own colonies. There barefaced appeals to selfishness, bordering on dishonesty, constantly win the confidence of large constituencies better educated, on the average, than our own; and even personal integrity is by no means a qualification for political life. Let it be granted that Anglo-Saxon good sense, if not a higher principle, generally prevents these evil influences being carried to the extreme length of spoliation or repudiation; still, the broad fact remains that, with the progress of Democracy, the standard of electoral purity and of public honour has apparently been lowered in highly-educated communities. Education alone, then, at least in its narrow sense, is no effectual safeguard against the perils of advancing Democracy. Nor have we a right to assume that England will long be protected against them by her precious inheritance of sound traditions, so far as these traditions are mere survivals of institutions which Democracy is breaking down.

There is, however, another explanation of the contrast between the code of political morality recognised in England and that recognised in the United States or the colonies. These democratic communities have practically no foreign policy or imperial responsibilities, and politics are practically confined to conflicts and regulation of material interests. In this country, on the other hand, even the humblest elector is sometimes made to feel that he is a member of the great European family, and a partner in a world-wide empire, to govern which requires a wisdom beyond the shrewdness of a merchant or railway director. Moreover, new countries are far more emphatically 'nations of shopkeepers' than England, having comparatively few citizens with leisure, independence, and social prestige enough to rise above mercenary interests, or even to dispense with a salary for serving in Parliament. The advantage which England enjoys, in this respect, may well be weighed by the coming Democracy against the advantage of paying members, and thus opening Parliament to needy adventurers as well as to needy patriots.

At all events, our best hope for the future lies in cultivating and elevating the nobler conception of citizenship and statesmanship hitherto characteristic of England. Nothing but the maintenance of a high national character will avail to render the progress of Democracy conducive to national greatness or to national happiness. The standard of public virtue which may suffice for aristocratic government will not suffice for democratic government. The whole sphere of politics must be moralised, so to speak, and brought under the control of purer motives, if the more direct rule of the people in England is to be as successful as the older form of constitutional monarchy. If Democracy will not endure Privilege and Authority, it must learn to yield ungrudging loyalty to intellectual and moral ascendancy. If it is not to be actuated by a refined sense of honour, it must be actuated by a robust sense of duty. If it will not be controlled by any power independent of itself, it must deliberately erect barriers against its own autoocracy, as, for instance, by a thorough recon



struction of local government, and the delegation to local bodies of a much larger jurisdiction. The richer classes, on their part, must adopt the advice of M. de Laveleye, and combine plain living with high thinking and earnest work. The spirit of Christianity, democratic as it is, must be carried into political life, and the so-called laws of political economy must be reconciled with the dictates of benevolence, not by class legislation, but rather by the voluntary efforts of individuals and societies. Socialism must be combated, not by flinging away the rights of property, as sops to soothe the Socialistic Cerberus, but, on the contrary, by far-sighted measures favouring a more equal distribution of property, and making as many citizens as possible shareholders in the national prosperity. If the House of Lords is to be upheld, it must be reinforced with life-peers, and submit to such other modifications of its constitution as may convert it into an efficient and popular Second Chamber. If the Church is to be upheld, it must be made in fact, and not in name only, the Church of the people.

Such counsels as these will not prevail, or will be adopted too late, if men fitted by nature and position to lead Democracy cynically persist in holding aloof from politics. Electors cannot be justly blamed for mistaking copper for gold, if the gold is never offered for their acceptance. Nor can it be truly asserted of Democracy that it is the implacable foe of all superiority. It levels social and political inequalities, but it cannot level superiority of birth, of wealth, of intellect, of character, of energy, or of education; on the contrary, it gives free scope to each of these, and often rewards its fortunate possessor with unstinted homage. Science and art, literature and commerce, may and do flourish under the shelter of Democracy; it rests with their leading representatives to moderate and ennoble Democracy by heartily associating themselves with the people. Let it never be forgotten that, come what may, the mighty engines of Education and the Press must always remain in the hands of men far above the multitude in mental culture, if not in social position. The Universities have already done much in England, and

may yet do far more, to promote the sentiment of fraternity by which equality should be consecrated. The London School Board, a standing example of unselfish public spirit, has appreciably humanised the dangerous classes of the metropolis, not only by reclaiming the street Arabs, but also by establishing a bond of sympathy, and a common ground of public action, between the higher and lower strata of the vast London population. It is in this direction, and in this spirit, that we must continue to move patiently and fearlessly, if we are to ward off the violent shock of democratic revolution by the gradual process of democratic evolution. For the vices of Democracy are only to be subdued by a vigorous development of its virtues; and those only will have strength to control the democratic movement who honestly and heartily embrace the democratic ideal of society.

*DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM*

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THE progress of Democracy and the progress of Socialism are now habitually coupled with each other, not only in the current language of politics, but in the minds of statesmen and grave political writers. Yet it must not be assumed that both tendencies are equally inevitable and equally irresistible. The progress of Democracy, as De Tocqueville said above forty years ago, is 'the most constant, the most ancient, and the most permanent fact of history.' It is inevitable, because European society has long been shaping itself, as American society had shaped itself from the first, into a mould inconsistent, not, indeed, with any other form, but with any other principle, of government. It is irresistible, because the influences which favour it, such as the spread of education and the extension of locomotion, are perpetually gaining strength; and because the influences opposed to it, such as the respect for Privilege and for Authority, are ever losing their hold on the reason of mankind. These propositions cannot be affirmed of 'Socialism' in any among the various senses of which that most flexible term is capable. To analyse those senses would be worse than vain; for none has yet acquired a fixed meaning. When, however, the progress of 'Socialism' is regarded as inseparable from the progress of Democracy, a tolerably definite idea is usually attached to 'Socialism.' It is not meant that democratic progress involves a communistic partition of wealth, or the abrogation of property as an institution; nor is it only meant that democratic progress involves a benevolent and active concern for the greatest happiness of the greatest number. What is meant is that democratic progress involves a progressive revolution of social conditions,

whether gradual or violent, towards greater equality in the distribution of wealth; and that this equality is to be realised by means of State legislation and State control. The bolder apostles of State Socialism, and notably the Executive Committee of the so-called 'Democratic Federation,' do not shrink from specifically formulating their claims. In a manifesto drawn up by their Chairman and Treasurer, and endorsed by the whole Committee, they insist upon the right and duty of the 'people,' whom they identify with the wage-earning class, to obtain control of the means of production, including the land, in every country. The labour of all is to be organised collectively for the benefit of all: the State is to appropriate the land, apparently without compensation; to take over and work the railways and the shipping; to own all mines, factories, and workshops, managing them through superintendents chosen by the operatives; to substitute National Banks for private banks; and to replace shops by 'State and Communal Centres of Distribution.' Other advocates of State Socialism are less self-confident or less outspoken; but it may safely be said that a more equal distribution of wealth to be produced by the direct interference of Government with individual action is the popular ideal of that Socialism which is conceived as the twin-sister of Democracy. Let us, then, consider how far the democratic movement, which all must recognise, actually runs in this direction; how far counter-forces, antagonistic to Socialism, are likely to be strengthened by this very movement; and how far it may be possible by a wise policy to guide the current of Democracy into a less perilous channel.

And, first, it is important to distinguish between various classes of measures loosely described as Socialistic by those who detect the cloven foot of Socialism in every legislative restriction of individual liberty. From the point of view adopted by the Liberty and Property Defence League, and more or less sanctioned by Mr. Herbert Spencer's Philosophy, a very large proportion of the Acts passed in recent years must be regarded as Socialistic in their character. Not

merely the Irish Land Acts of 1870 and 1881, the Arrears Act, the Ground Game Act, and the Agricultural Holdings Act, but the Settled Estates Act of 1876, and the Settled Land Act of 1882, must be relegated into this category, since they all limit the freedom of landowners in dealing with their property. The same must be said of the many Acts regulating Shipping, Mines, Factories, the Liquor Traffic, and Labourers' Dwellings. In all these cases freedom of contract is invaded, while Education Acts curtail the right of parents to keep their children in ignorance, Adulteration Acts supersede the old maxim of *caveat emptor* in the purchase of commodities, Sanitary Acts override the independence of private households for the sake of the public health, while professions are harassed by such rules as are contained in the Medical Acts, the Dentists' Act, the Solicitors' Remuneration Act, the Veterinary Surgeons' Act, and the Pedlars' Act, not to speak of the Employers' Liability Act, which covers almost the whole field of manufacturing and mercantile enterprise. Whatever objection may be raised against any one of these measures, it is clear that, if all be condemned as Socialistic, hardly any sphere will be left for the legitimate action of Law and Government. Moreover, a very little reflection will show, not only that some differ very widely, in principle, from others, but that some are, while others are not, in harmony with the prevailing spirit of Democracy.

Take, for example, the Sanitary Acts, under which it may be said that rates mainly paid by the upper and middle classes are expended upon objects which mainly benefit the poor. There is nothing really Socialistic in the principle of these Acts, the demand for which has been justified by the failure of isolated individual action to provide effectually for drainage and water-supply. In old times, every man was held responsible for nuisances arising from his own neglect, but this liability was found to be wholly inadequate even for the prevention of nuisances, while it left untouched all the positive sanitary requirements of great urban populations massed together under modern conditions. Hence the neces-

sity of doing by collective municipal action that which must otherwise have remained undone, or been done at a prodigiously greater cost; and if the poor have incidentally reaped greater advantage than the rich, so much the better, for no one is damnified thereby. The principle of the Education Acts is different, but not more essentially Socialistic. It does not rest on the duty of the rich to supply the poor with educational necessaries; but rather on the interest of the State in reducing the sources of pauperism and crime. It has scarcely been contended that the humbler classes have a right to get their children taught at the expense of other classes; but rather that, if popular education is a State necessity, and if indigent parents are compelled to forego their children's earnings during the school age, at the bidding of the law, schooling must be given free, or at a minimum cost. Thus, both the Sanitary Acts and the Education Acts, whatever may be said against them, are founded on reasons of public utility, and not on the principle of equalising the lots of the higher and lower classes in the community. The various Acts passed for the protection of women and children against excessive labour, or of grown men against certain forms of oppression and temptation, may or may not be defensible on grounds of policy, and may or may not conduce to manly independence in the national character. But they cannot properly be called Socialistic, inasmuch as they were not dictated by a desire to promote the Socialistic ideal of equality; but rather, as Mr. Goschen points out, by a revulsion of the national conscience against the moral results of the *laissez-faire* system, left to operate uncontrolled. When the public clamours for legislation to preserve the lives of miners or sailors against preventable accidents, it is not with the idea of disturbing the distribution of profits between labour and capital, but only of putting a stop to a scandalous waste of human life. Even the Irish Land Act, Socialistic as it is both in its principle and in its practical effect, was not openly advocated on Socialistic grounds. The motive power which carried it was, no doubt, Socialistic; but the

majority of its Parliamentary supporters were made to believe that it was necessary in order to rectify the consequences of former injustice. Indeed, however clear the germs of Socialism may be discerned in many recent statutes passed under a democratic impulse, it would be difficult to specify one which is distinctively Socialistic, unless it be the Poor Law itself, or the Act which exempts small incomes from the incidence of the Income Tax. Both these exceptions are defensible, in the opinion of most sound economists; but they are far more Socialistic in essence than such measures as the Factory Laws or the Merchant Shipping Acts.

It does not follow, however, that Democracy, even in this country, is not Socialistic in its tendencies and aspirations. In his posthumous chapters on Socialism, written in 1869, Mr. J. S. Mill records a salutary warning against judging of Household Suffrage by the fruits of the first one or two elections after its adoption. Until the new electors learned to realise and to exercise their power, little change was perceptible either in the quality of the candidates or in the nature of the pledges demanded of them. In both these respects, the progress of Democracy, aided by that of popular education, has now made itself felt; it will make itself more powerfully felt when household suffrage is extended to the counties, and the connection between modern Democracy and Socialism is rapidly acquiring an altogether new significance for an English statesman. For it would be very unsafe to imagine that working men, now admitted on equal terms into the governing class, and commanding a numerical majority of votes, will long abstain from using those votes for the purpose of furthering whatever objects they may have at heart. The important question is whether these objects are, after all, Socialistic, or whether English Democracy, unlike that of the Continent, will reject the phantom of communistic equality, and embrace the surer but less seductive hope of social regeneration which is offered alike by Christianity and by Liberalism.

Looking simply at the external causes which have favoured

the spread of modern Socialism, we must confess that most of them operate with peculiar intensity in England. Nowhere else is the contrast more appalling between the lot of Dives and the lot of Lazarus, and nowhere else is this contrast so emphasised and stereotyped as it is by the English institution of Primogeniture, with all its far-reaching consequences. In no other country is the gulf between manufacturer and workman more impassable, or the class-prejudices of workmen more liable to be stimulated by their aggregation into great factories and their visible separation both from the mercantile aristocracy and from the *bourgeoisie*. In no other country have the small working employers and other intermediate links between capital and labour been more nearly crushed out by the development of industrial organisation. In no other do so few husbandmen own the lands which they cultivate; in no other is landed property concentrated in the hands of a territorial aristocracy so small numerically and so constantly decreasing. No other Legislature has adopted and applied Free Trade doctrines so consistently as our own, whereas no other body of workpeople in Europe have carried the system of Trade-Unionism to such perfection as the English. For these and similar reasons, it might have been predicted that Socialistic doctrines were likely to find a congenial soil in the bosom of the English Democracy, and that Karl Marx and Lassalle, Fourier and Louis Blanc, would number hosts of readers, if not hosts of disciples, among the more thoughtful of English Radicals.

If such is not the fact—if Democracy in England has been hitherto less tinged with Socialism than in any other European country—the explanation must be sought in certain permanent characteristics of English society which afford a solid ground of hope for the future. However unequal the distribution of wealth may have been in England, the national sense of humanity and justice has ever been kept alive and quick to redress every ascertained grievance. When the progress of enclosure and other economical changes reduced the English peasant to a day-labourer, it was at once felt that



his maintenance in the last resort must be undertaken by the community. The English Poor Law, to which there is no parallel in foreign legislation, has established a chronic and statutable kind of Socialism in our internal economy which has acted as an almost sovereign antidote to acute and revolutionary Socialism. Whenever a grievous case of oppression or hardship has been made out, a special law has been passed to remedy it, with a cynical disregard of symmetry or juridical science, but with an earnest desire to give every class a fair chance in the race of life. Again, the glaring disparity of fortune and worldly advantages between rich and poor has never been aggravated by caste-like divisions, while it has been greatly mitigated by kindly intercourse and charitable sympathy. Since the Reformation, the clergy of the Established Church have ceased to be a sacerdotal order, and, whatever their shortcomings, have done much to relieve the sufferings and to plead the cause of the poor, herein reflecting the genuine spirit of Christianity itself. Without the Poor Law, without the immense expansion of English charity, both public and private, and without the levelling influences of religion penetrating all classes, it is certain that Socialism would be far more threatening in England than it is at present.

It would be easy to enumerate other reasons why Socialism has as yet assumed a far less formidable and organised aspect in England than on the Continent. Where the right of public meeting is unlimited, or limited only by the requirements of public order, conspiracy gives place to open discussion and association. Where the Press is free, wild projects can be propounded without reserve, but are at once subjected to an intelligent criticism, which puts their supporters to shame. Where the ambition of rising in social position is general, and the competitive system is firmly established in education as well as in the public service, the solidarity of the so-called *prolétariat*, as well as of the so-called *bourgeoisie*, is greatly impaired, and the hostility of manual to intellectual labour is sensibly neutralised. Where military

enlistment is voluntary and conscription unknown, one of the strongest motives for reorganising society in the interest of labour has no existence. Where Provident and Friendly Societies, Building Societies and Trades-Unions, number six millions of members, and own funds amounting to 68,000,000*l.*, the obstacles to a Communistic scheme of plunder become extremely serious, and the most sanguine of its apostles may well shrink from provoking a contest with the possessors of property. Where the privacy and independence of family life are a national tradition, shared even by those whose family domicile is a single room, men do not so readily band themselves into revolutionary brotherhoods, or submit to such rules as Socialistic organisation would impose. Where country labourers have long been accustomed to see neighbours migrate or emigrate from their native villages, and town operatives are constantly shifting their abodes in order to better themselves, the basis of a Socialistic Commune would be liable to constant disturbance. Where joint-stock enterprise and co-operative associations are widely diffused, enabling the smallest capitals to be profitably employed, the chasm between capitalist and labourer is already bridged over, and little is left for Socialism to promise except sheer confiscation. Where the love of games and field-sports creates a friendly tie between young men of all ranks in the country, and the squire has usually a kind word for the ploughman, it is hard to develop that intense hatred of gentlefolk which inspired the great revolts of peasants in the Middle Ages, and which still forms in some parts of Ireland a prime motive of agrarian Socialism.

But it is needless to multiply instances of the natural forces hostile to Socialism in England. Though English society doubtless appears at first sight to be rigidly stratified 'in horizontal layers,' these layers are crossed by so many vertical sections, and the whole mass is so welded together by the manifold action of a genuine national life, intensified by the labours and struggles of centuries, that attempts to set class against class never fail to encounter very powerful

obstacles. Even the minor contests between masters and men in respect of wages are beginning to be settled by arbitration, and not even the most internecine strike or lock-out can long dissolve the many other bonds, apart from trade disputes, which unite fellow-citizens to each other. The leaders of the belligerent forces may be members of the same religious congregation; they may be of the same political party, and have actively co-operated in the last Parliamentary election; they may be serving on the same local committee, or equally interested in the same local improvement. On the other hand, the essential differences between the ideas and interests of town and country—always a Conservative safeguard—are reinforced in these islands by a singular diversity of race, manners, and character between different parts of the United Kingdom, and even of England itself. If Socialism means uniformity under the guidance of a central power, it is probable that English Democracy will be very slow in moulding itself into such a type. A long process of education must surely be required before it can assimilate the ideas and acquire the habits necessary to unlearn the lesson of self-government. Perhaps in the course of this process it may discover that, after all, the true line of Democratic progress lies in an exactly opposite direction. For the most powerful barrier against Socialism in this country has been the national spirit of personal and constitutional liberty, entrenched behind so many outworks of law and custom. This spirit, inherited from the institutions of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, has been fostered by Protestantism, by commercial and maritime enterprise, by the tenacity of home-life among rural labourers inhabiting detached cottages, by the immense variety of industries among town-artisans, and by the absence of conscription or any other form of compulsory service. The typical Englishman, even of the humbler classes, has an instinctive sense of personal rights, and an instinctive jealousy of over-regulation. He may become a member of a trades-union, as he may join a political union, for the purpose of obtaining some object which he values; but he is generally

reluctant to part with his own freedom of action, and well pleased to resume it. He is ready, of course, to receive benefits at the hands of 'Government'; but in his inmost heart he distrusts 'Government,' as an engine sure to be worked by officials at headquarters, over whom he can have no practical control.

This difference in sentiment between foreign and English champions of labour has not failed to display itself at International Congresses of workmen, and was specially marked at the Congress of last year in Paris. Hitherto, English Democracy, so far as it was represented at these gatherings, has committed itself to no wild schemes of social regeneration by means of State agency. On the contrary, the leading English delegates have warmly supported the counter-scheme of so organising the forces of labour throughout Europe that it may be able to make its own terms with capital in the open field of competition. Nor is there any reason to suppose that Socialistic clubs, such as abound in France, Germany, and Switzerland, are either numerous or influential in England. Of course, associations of this kind do not court publicity, but, if they had been important enough to be a power in any constituency, serious attempts would assuredly have been made to force Socialistic pledges on candidates at the last General Election. No doubt London shelters hundreds of Socialistic and even Nihilistic conspirators, but they mostly consist of foreign refugees, and we have as yet no evidence of their doctrines having taken any serious hold on the minds of our own working classes. Though a resolution demanding the so-called Nationalisation of Land was passed by a small meeting at the Trades-Union Congress of 1882, it was virtually rescinded by another meeting at the Trades-Union Congress of last year, in favour of an amendment simply affirming the necessity of radical changes in the land system for the benefit of the people at large. The Democratic Federation goes further, and makes the nationalisation of land an essential part of its programme; but we have yet to learn the strength of this arrogant body, and it is more than probable that a

premature attempt to link Democracy with Socialism in an appeal to English householders would end in a signal defeat at the poll.

It would be a grave error, however, to measure the advance of Socialistic opinion in England by the feebleness of its public demonstrations. If English working men have only coquetted with the International and other revolutionary leagues which have risen from its ashes, it is to be feared that vast numbers of them have lent a ready ear to Mr. Henry George's project for confiscating the entire soil of the country without compensation. If they have wisely declined to stake the practical interests of industry upon the success of any untried scheme for reconstituting society, they are now being encouraged to regard the State as an instrument for giving them special advantages at the expense of other classes. There can hardly be a better illustration of the crude economical theories now becoming current under the name of State Socialism than the growing demand for State interference, not merely to regulate, but to construct and let out, dwellings for the poor in London and other great towns. In this case, as Mr. Goschen points out, nearly all the reasons which are supposed to justify State Socialism have combined to produce the demand: 'a public sense of moral responsibility, dissatisfaction with the present distribution of wealth, complications arising from the crowded state of society, and the belief that Government is the only *deus ex machinâ* to solve an almost insoluble problem.' Mr. Goschen agrees with Lord Salisbury that the principle of *laissez-faire* cannot be pleaded against the right of the State to abate this evil, and that, considering how many of its causes are artificial, if not State-created, the State may justly deal with the ownership of house property in certain overcrowded districts as 'a virtual monopoly,' and with the rents thereof as 'monopoly rents,' to be valued at less than a market-price in the event of compulsory sale. Mr. Fawcett goes nearly as far in the same direction, but neither he nor Mr. Goschen is prepared to countenance the proposal that improved dwellings for the poor should be erected out

of public funds. This proposal is not in itself Socialistic. If it were shown that house-building on a large scale could be carried out more efficiently by Imperial or municipal authorities than by private individuals, and if the rents to be charged were inexorably fixed so as fully to cover the cost of building and maintenance, there would be no more objection—in principle—to State lodging-houses than to State post-offices and savings-banks. But this is not what is contemplated in the Socialistic claim of Government aid for the accommodation of poor families in great towns. What is contemplated is that either the Imperial or the local Government should directly or indirectly provide such accommodation at a rent below the sum required to pay interest and replace capital. The deficiency must needs be made good either out of rates or out of taxes; and both of these are paid in great part by persons with small incomes, little above the struggling class on whose behalf this claim is made. If the State lodging-houses were rate-supported, and were also fully rated, many a poor man would thus lose nearly as much in rates as he would gain in rent; if they were not fully rated, their occupants would be shifting a portion of their own burdens upon the shoulders of their less privileged, and perhaps not richer, neighbours.

But this is not all. The moment it was known that comfortable dwellings were being let at a minimum rent in a given district, a fresh tide of immigration would set towards that district, and the most stringent restrictions against the reception of lodgers would be needed to prevent worse overcrowding than before. Even as it is, the population of the East End is swelled and demoralised by the indiscriminate relief dispensed there in response to sensational appeals, and—though it is a hard saying—the sympathetic public may be as much to blame as extortionate landlords and employers for the misery of dockyard labourers and match-box makers. Such is the inference to be drawn from the statistics of destitution in towns which are overstocked with charitable endowments, and such is the conclusion to which some of

the best friends of the East-End poor have been led by their own experience. But here we are brought face to face with Bastiat's favourite antithesis between 'that which is seen' and 'that which is not seen.' That which is seen is the heart-breaking distress and widespread immorality prevailing under the present *laissez-faire* system—evils which might be largely reduced by a vigorous enforcement of existing laws based on the sound principle of individual responsibility. That which is not seen is the probable reproduction of these evils, in a more complicated form, if the State should undertake to house some of its poorer citizens at the expense of all the rest—thereby weakening the sense of individual responsibility among the owners of property, discouraging the spirit of self-help among the industrious poor, and reviving the evil traditions of class-legislation. And all this in order to root in the soil of certain metropolitan districts a favoured group of families much larger than can be decently supported by the ordinary rate of employment in those districts. Here we have Socialism in its least defensible form—the claim that 'Society,' which has nothing to do with bringing children into the world, shall guarantee to each and all of those who may choose to live on a given spot a comfortable lodging on that spot, imposing a tax on the more provident and industrious members of the community to save the residuum from the alternative of emigration or the workhouse.

True it is that no demand so preposterous has yet been embodied in any Democratic programme issued by any respectable body. Still, it is not only 'in the air,' but has been so thoroughly popularised in articles and speeches, that a more robust faith in economical principles than has lately been shown will be needed to prevent its becoming a hustings question. The successful propagation of Mr. George's doctrines is even more startling. Here is a grave proposal for relieving from taxation all other classes in the community by confiscating, without compensation, the property of one class, either openly or, as Mr. Goldwin Smith describes it, 'under the thin disguise of a predatory use of the taxing power.'

This sweeping measure is to embrace all kinds of landed property—the great hereditary estate and the most recent purchase of the Manchester cotton-spinner—the broad acres of millionaires and the little freehold reclaimed from the common, or acquired through a building society by the saving artisan—the land which owes its value solely to gifts of Nature, and that which owes its value solely to improvements executed by its possessor. How this is to be effected without civil war, and how so vast a system of land agency is to be carried on honestly, by any Government hitherto devised, are questions too practical to occupy the attention of those who discourse glibly on the ‘Nationalisation of Land.’ It is assumed that land, however acquired, differs so essentially from all other kinds of wealth, however acquired, that its possession can justly be treated as robbery. It is assumed that all the millions now received by landowners from agricultural rents, or ground-rents of houses in towns, are absorbed unprofitably, like Cleopatra’s pearl, and not expended, to a great extent, in employing productive labour. It is assumed, otherwise, that if the State were to pocket all these incomes, and apply them to a reduction of taxation, it could also, on the principle of eating cake and having it, apply them, as before, to employing the same amount of productive labour—for, if it could not, the labourers formerly paid out of the landowner’s rent would hardly be the gainers. It is assumed that a Land Department, with a staff of salaried officials manipulating a colossal revenue, would be proof against temptations of jobbery, and manage its affairs better than individual proprietors. It is assumed that full rents would be exacted for the relief of the general taxpayer, and yet that farm-tenants would somehow obtain benefits involving a remission of rent. Such are specimens of the presumptions and assumptions underlying the popular conception of Mr. George’s scheme, if they do not underlie the scheme itself. We have nothing here to do with the various economical paradoxes incidental to it, such as the independent capacity of Labour to maintain itself without the aid of Capital. What is really memorable is the simple fact



that an eloquent book, which is understood to justify wholesale spoliation, and ignores the most patent objections founded on the reason and experience of mankind, should be circulated by myriads of copies, and find respectful hearers, not among the masses only, but among the ostensible leaders of the coming Democracy. Possibly, the grotesque illustrations of his doctrines to which Mr. George has lately committed himself, and the character of the patronage under which he has been introduced to English audiences, may supply a wholesome corrective to his influence, but the previous spread of that influence is in itself an ominous sign of the times.

For what is the fundamental assumption on which all this fabric of speculative plunder reposes? It is the assumption that wealth is itself the cause of poverty; that, as the rich become richer, the poor become poorer. But this assumption is in flagrant opposition to facts, as was recently shown by Mr. Robert Giffen in his Address on the progress of the working classes in the last half-century. Mr. Giffen finds, as the result of an exhaustive inquiry, that, one with another, 'the workman of to-day receives from 50 to 100 per cent. more money for 20 per cent. less work; in round figures, he has gained from 70 to 100 per cent. in fifty years in money return.' Meanwhile, the price of nearly all articles consumed by working men has diminished, especially that of bread, the most important of all. The price of meat, it is true, has risen, chiefly because working-class families consume far more of it now than fifty years ago; and though house-rent is much higher, partly because such families are better lodged than in former days, the heavier charge under this head is altogether outweighed by the saving under others. A far larger proportion of the national income is now expended on education and otherwise for the benefit of the working classes. The death-rate has been greatly reduced; pauperism and crime have declined still more remarkably; savings-bank deposits and the capital of provident societies have enormously increased; the importation of tea, sugar, and other simple luxuries, mainly

consumed by the working classes, has trebled or quadrupled itself in half a century. An analysis of the income-tax and probate-duty returns shows that, while the growth of capital has been very large, the whole income derived from it has not by any means grown at the same rate as the whole income derived from wages, and moreover that, instead of becoming more and more concentrated, the income of capitalists has become more and more diffused, so that each capitalist is, on the average, only 15 per cent. richer than was the case forty years ago, when the income tax was first instituted. In conclusion, Mr. Giffen points out what Mr. J. S. Mill had pointed out long before, that it is the grossest of Socialistic delusions to regard the income of capitalists as so much spoil which might be divided among the masses without any corresponding loss. So reasoned the simple folk who killed the hen that laid the golden eggs. A very large part of the profits on capital is now saved and re-invested in business. Hence the constant rise of wages concurrently with a constant advance of population. Let these profits be scattered abroad, and spent instead of saved, and a constant advance of population will mean a constant fall of wages.

It may be objected to Mr. Giffen's statistics that he dates his inquiry from a period when the labouring classes of this country were in a state of abnormal depression. Such an objection would be material if these statistics were used to justify a self-complacent optimism. But it does not affect their value as showing that, instead of being intensified, poverty is reduced by progress, even with an ever-growing population, and the refutation of that monstrous paradox would have been still more striking had the population been stationary.

Happily, in this country there is a wide interval between the sentimental acceptance of mischievous paradoxes and their practical adoption. As soon as any Socialistic plan for providing State lodging-houses comes to be embodied in a Bill, and tested by debate, the crushing arguments against it will be recognised by the common sense of the nation. It

will then be remembered that a more hopeful and plausible experiment in Socialism—that of outdoor relief with a view to preserve the integrity and self-respect of family life—ended in disastrous failure, a chronic depression of wages, and widespread degradation of the very class which it was designed to benefit. Still more decisive will be the national verdict against the Nationalisation of Land on Mr. George's principle when the scheme has once taken a tangible shape and emerges from the hands of a draughtsman. It will then appear that, apart from its revolting injustice, it runs counter to a far stronger and sounder Democratic tendency of the age, which aims at largely increasing the number of landed proprietors, and converting occupiers into owners. Other Socialistic projects which depend for their achievement on centralisation will inevitably conflict with anti-centralising influences already existing in English society, and likely to be developed by the onward progress of Democracy. One of these influences is the growing strength of what is called 'Voluntaryism' in relation to Church affairs and education; another is the spirit which, operating in the political sphere, has animated the various movements in favour of 'Home Rule' and 'Local Option.' Both of these principles represent the assertion of communal or congregational liberty against 'Collectivist' dictation. Of course, the Socialism of Owen, Fourier, and others, who regard communes, great or small, as the constituent and self-governing units of the new social fabric, would be more or less in harmony with either of them. But State Socialism of the Collectivist type, in order to be efficacious, would imperatively require an uniformity of administration equally at variance with individual liberty and with communal independence. A centralised Socialistic government would never tolerate competition in the use of ecclesiastical or educational endowments; still less would it permit one municipality to shut up all the public-houses, and another, perhaps adjoining it, to establish free trade in drink. The individualism of communities or voluntary associations is as directly antagonistic to Socialism, in this

paternally despotic form, as the individualism of separate human beings.

Here, then, let us pause and consider what should be the attitude of a far-sighted Liberal statesman towards Democratic Socialism. He will assuredly not seek to combat Socialism by vain efforts to arrest the march of Democracy, thus forfeiting both the right and the power to guide that march in a salutary direction. He will not shut his eyes to the portentous evils caused by the present unequal distribution of wealth, nor will he lightly conclude that such a distribution is dictated by immutable decrees of Nature or of Providence. He will not forget that slavery appeared to our forefathers as natural and as necessary as the abject poverty of millions of our fellow-citizens now appears to a certain school of economists. He will not imagine that the so-called laws of Political Economy have any cogency in themselves, or can be more than careful generalisations from human experience, by which they must be frequently corrected, and to which they must be constantly re-adapted. He will not be deterred by the stigma attaching to Socialism from weighing impartially serious proposals for equalising more nearly the respective lots of the rich and of the poor, even if they appear to imperil the sacred institution of private property. He will, however, bear in mind and duly estimate the fact that communal property—at least in the shape of tribal ownership—is not an untried experiment, but an experiment condemned by the judgment of past generations, having been deliberately abandoned for the system of enclosure, in most parts of Europe, with the advance of civilisation. He will equally lay to heart the lessons of history respecting the abuses of State intervention, and the origin of the *laissez-faire* system, while he will not decline to revise these lessons by the light of new social conditions. He will repudiate the notion that every child born into the world has rights against society, as distinct from its parents, but he will admit that, if the State cannot stop the increase of population, it cannot allow the Darwinian struggle for existence to operate unchecked. Starting from

this point of view, he will probably be led to reject most of the drastic remedies offered by Socialism, but to believe that by less direct and violent methods the most legitimate object of Socialism—the diminution of social inequality—may gradually be attained.

1. The first of these methods is so obvious that it is difficult to understand how it can occupy so little space in the minds of Socialistic writers. It consists in a stricter regulation of successions to property, both real and personal. If there be such a thing as a natural right of man, it is the right of each to enjoy during life the entire fruits of his own labour and skill, instead of being mulcted for the benefit of his less skilful and industrious fellows. On the other hand, if there be a right which is a pure creation of law, founded on no instinctive sense of justice, and hardly recognised by primitive societies, it is the right of bequeathing his acquisitions to others at his own discretion. Yet, strange to say, it is the first of these rights which is rudely assailed by modern Socialists, while the second is little challenged, except as a corollary of the first. It is Capital as such, and not inherited capital, which is treated as the mortal foe of Labour, alike by the bloodthirsty pioneers of Nihilism and Anarchy, by the respectable followers of Karl Marx or Henry George, and even by the more extreme leaders of English Trades-Unionism. Whereas at the Bâle Congress of the famous International Society, in 1869, a resolution in favour of abolishing hereditary succession was negatived, after a lively discussion, by a majority of more than two to one.

This is not the place to examine minutely the relation of Capital to Labour; it is enough to realise that no civilised labour can possibly be carried on without it, and that no motive except the expectation of personal gain has ever proved strong enough to encourage the saving which can alone produce capital. This is the all-sufficient defence of individual property, but it is a defence which applies only to wealth earned by a man's own exertions, and not to wealth inherited from others. There is no reason whatever to suppose that

accumulation would cease, even if there were no right of bequest, while there is the clearest evidence that the passion for accumulation is peculiarly strong where, as in France and other countries under the Code Napoléon, the right of bequest is narrowly limited by law, for the express purpose of promoting equality in the succession of children. The law of England, on the contrary, is eminently calculated, and indeed designed, to promote inequality. The right of Primogeniture, operating on landed estates in all cases of intestacy, and the power of settling both land and personalty on an unborn grandchild of unknown character, have produced in territorial families an inveterate custom of beggaring younger children for the aggrandisement of the eldest son, without regard to personal merit, which has consecrated an unequal rule of distribution throughout all the upper classes of English society, and penetrated far below them. To revise the law and curtail the custom of Primogeniture will be among the first tasks of Democratic statesmanship, and by so doing it will erect a breakwater athwart the tide of Socialism.

Perhaps it may even go further, and restrict the liberty of bequest within a testator's family, as it has already been restricted over most of the Continent, though not in the United States of America. If so, whatever other consequences may ensue, Socialism will not be the gainer, for a larger number of property-holders will be enlisted against Socialistic encroachments on property. A milder, but less practicable, alternative would be the adoption of Mill's suggestion, that no one should be allowed to inherit more than 'a comfortable independence.' The difficulty of carrying out this suggestion literally is self-evident, but a Liberal statesman, in a Democratic age, will not shrink from the idea of progressive succession and legacy duties, which may have much the same effect. The distinction between a progressive succession duty and a progressive income tax is very material. The latter, though worthy of far more consideration than it has received, strikes directly at acquisition, and might very seriously check the accumulation of capital. The former would leave the

capitalist full control of his own savings during life, and, if it weakened his incentives to accumulation, so far as these depend on his desire to enrich his children, it would sensibly increase the incentives to accumulation on the part of these very children, who might otherwise lapse into drones. The funds thus obtained by the State might be utilised in relief of other taxes, without robbing any one—either the deceased capitalist who, having brought nothing into the world, is entitled to carry nothing out, or his children who, knowing the law beforehand, would have governed their expectations and laid their plans accordingly. The whole amount of capital applicable to reproductive uses would not be diminished, but only redistributed, for whatever the estate of the deceased might lose would go to increase the capital of the general taxpayer.

2. But a far safer mode of satisfying the reasonable demands of modern Socialism consists in the bold and vigorous development of local self-government. Communism and Communalism, though often confounded, are naturally opposed to each other, as we may learn from the example of Saxon times, where the communal rights of each township or hundred were stoutly maintained by the same local assemblies which jealously guarded individual rights of property. So far as State Socialism has for its end the subordination of private to public interests, an extension of local self-government will often prove a more potent means of attaining that end than an extension of Imperial control. All departments of State must needs be guided by general rules, and no officers acting under instructions from Downing Street can bring 'the master's eye' to bear on local affairs with the same vigilance or success as officers employed by a local authority. Had the old County Courts been maintained, they would assuredly have prevented numberless encroachments of modern landowners on common rights by piecemeal enclosure, obstruction or diversion of footpaths, the creation of nuisances injurious to the public health or convenience, and the like. The way to put down such grievances is not to call in State

aid, but to popularise and invigorate local tribunals, so that each invasion of public franchises may be promptly denounced and checked under the pressure of public opinion. This is the spirit of American Democracy, and the strength which it has infused into the local institutions of the United States is probably the main reason why Socialism has there made so little progress. Even a half-Socialistic measure, like the concession of free education to all citizens, will produce a very different effect according as it is carried out by an Imperial or a local authority. If the whole cost of maintaining elementary schools were thrown on the Consolidated Fund, no matter how lavishly inspectors might be multiplied, school-management would at once flag, healthy rivalry would cease, and the average standard of attainments among the scholars would almost certainly be lowered. It would be far otherwise if, as in America, the same principle were applied by each municipality or parish. It may, perhaps, be doubted whether rural labourers, however eager to obtain improved cottages at the public expense, would not use their votes to abolish compulsory attendance if they could, even though education were free; but a few years hence Democracy will heartily adopt universal education, at all events if it be free. Those who paid school-rates would then take care to get their money's worth, and a large part of the population might be expected to feel an honourable pride in their school-buildings and staff. In a word, there would be less of Socialism, but more of true Democracy, in the system of popular education.

3. If we now look at Socialism from its purely industrial side, we may well ask what it has to offer which is not to be obtained with far less disturbance of society under a system of industrial partnership. Let us take an extreme case, and suppose national workshops, such as proved a disastrous failure in Paris, to be established in London for the benefit of distressed operatives. Capital would be required to work them; let us further suppose this capital to be raised by confiscating the property of the rich, or some other Socialistic device. But this capital, however it might be raised, would



mainly be withdrawn from some other business, that is, from the employment of labour elsewhere, so that, as a whole, the labouring class might gain little or nothing. But let this pass; the question remains whether either capital or labour is likely to be so beneficially invested in national workshops as in workshops belonging to industrial partnerships. The marvellous success of two such enterprises in France goes far to justify Mill's belief in their value as an agency for reconciling the claims of labour and capital. There are, of course, difficulties in managing them, because workmen are less trustful and amenable to discipline as partners than as factory hands; and these difficulties have marred the success of similar experiments in England. But the difficulties incident to managing an industrial or co-operative partnership are as nothing compared with those to be surmounted if the State were really to undertake the impossible task of organising labour and apportioning wages on Socialistic principles. 'Can we suppose,' Mr. Mill asks, 'that, with men as they now are, duty and honour are more powerful principles of action than personal interest?' Can we doubt that under a Socialistic system of State management the spirit of improvement would be crushed out by the spirit of routine, that discord would take the place of harmonious discipline, and that, however equably the products of labour might be distributed, the quantity, if not the quality, of them would be vastly diminished? These risks would be avoided, or at least greatly mitigated, under a system of industrial partnership, and the fact of such a system having made so little way in England is a strong proof that industrial Socialism is out of harmony with the national character. At all events, so far as co-operation is a remedy for the evils of competition, it is a remedy which the working classes have in their own hands, and which they are fast learning to apply.

4. Another tendency which a wise statesman would encourage as a prophylactic against Socialism is the revival of some intermediate links, now missing, between capitalists or employers and workpeople. In the olden times every country-

gentleman farmed, every farmer worked, and most labourers owned or rented plots of land. All these classes were thus brought into closer intercourse with each other, and besides these a true peasantry still existed, combining the attributes of all. Almost the same might be said of manufacture, when the mechanic was an apprentice, destined in due course to be a master, and vast numbers of mechanics were at once their own masters and their own workmen. It would be too much to expect that modern trade and rural economy should flow back into the ancient channels of mediæval guilds and feudal land-tenure. But it is not too much to expect that, under the joint impulse of Democracy and education, the excessive subdivision of labour may be checked; that *petites industries* may again spring up and flourish, not only in the country, but in the heart of cities; that clever artificers may once more aspire to be masters of their whole craft, instead of mere cog-wheels in a complex machinery of production; that a constant ascending movement, such as exists in America, may cause the ranks of capital to be steadily recruited from the ranks of labour; that, in short, the natural inequalities of physical strength, mental ability, and moral character, may be left to operate freely in each generation with as little disturbance as possible from artificial obstacles created, but not justified, by the operation of similar inequalities in bygone ages.

The secret, then, whereby Socialism may be disarmed consists in satisfying its legitimate demands and nobler aspirations by measures founded on a juster and sounder principle. But, after all, the Socialistic leaven will continue to work in a Democratic community so long as the full virtues of individualism are not called into action. Socialism presupposes a far greater equality and uniformity of capacity and merit than actually exists among human beings. Until the laws of Nature can be reversed, and the prodigious differences between man and man can be effaced, it is doomed to inevitable defeat; but if it should ever triumph, it would triumph over the ruins of that individual energy to which

civilisation owes its vitality. It was the boast of the Athenian Democracy—the political marvel of the ancient world—that it gave unbounded play to individual character, and the American Democracy, however it may have since degenerated, originally drew its strength from the same fountain of individual liberty and independence. The suppression of this spirit, the absence of competition, and the prevalence of an ignorant State Socialism, as it may well be called, are the distinctive features of those Oriental Governments whose dreary and monotonous rule, prolonged over century after century, excluded the very idea of progress, and left no fruits to be reaped by posterity. The advice addressed by M. Edmond Scherer to French Democrats may well be laid to heart by English Democrats allured by the phantom of State Socialism :—

‘Do not imagine that one class is to be enriched by impoverishing others. Instead of opposing the formation of private fortunes, strive to increase the number of capitalists and proprietors; in like manner, instead of lowering public functions to bring them within the reach of incapacity, aim at drawing from the bosom of society all its inherent capacities, and at pressing them into the service of the State: in a word, let your establishment of social equality consist, not in forbidding natural superiorities to assert themselves or in forcing them down to the level of the general mediocrity, but, on the contrary, in favouring the manifestation and development of everything in the masses which is strong enough to rise above this level.’<sup>1</sup>

But then, as M. Scherer truly observes, this is not the Socialistic, but the Liberal, and, he might add, the Christian, solution of the social problem.

Much, indeed, remains for us to learn and to do before this solution can be fully verified and practically worked out. The state of the poor in most European countries is still, perhaps, as great a reproach to Christian philanthropy as the constant recurrence of war between Christian nations, but it

<sup>1</sup> *La Démocratie et la France*, Edmond Scherer, 1883.

is assuredly not a greater reproach. In both cases the selfishness of human nature has as yet proved too strong for Christian principles; but have we the very smallest reason to believe that, where Christianity has failed, Socialism would succeed? Can we imagine any ideal of human brotherhood nobler than is set before us by the Gospel, or stronger motives for embracing it than are there impressed upon mankind, or more earnest attempts to realise it than have been actually made, both in Europe and America, in commonwealths organised on a Christian model? The discouraging issue of such experiments should go far to convince reasonable men that what is wanted to hasten the good time coming is not so much organisation as moral and religious influences, operating more widely than heretofore on individual hearts and minds. Doubtless the new Democracy will strive hard to bridge over by legislation the gulf which now yawns between the rich and the poor, nor is there any cause to despair of its accomplishing much by the steady light of past experience. But there is little hope of its accomplishing anything by the false lights of Socialistic theories, which, so far as they do not elude practical tests, are found to be radically false. If its leaders be wise, they will direct their efforts, not so much to reconstructing 'Society,' which is an abstract conception, as to raising the characters and capacities of men, women and children, who are concrete realities. They will indulge in no querulous invectives against 'capitalism,' which is but a cant word for the power acquired by saving, but rather will exhort the working classes to win a share of this power by the same honourable process. They will see that abuse of competition is hardly more reasonable than abuse of gravitation, and that if capital now wings an exorbitant return from the produce of labour, the labourer may obtain a like return for himself by means of co-operation. They will beware of ignoring or reviling the inexorable law by virtue of which the 'refuse of human life'—the victims of disease, vice, and crushing misfortune—sink downwards and settle at the bottom of every society, except in Utopia, but will rather consider how to

minimise and elevate even this residuum, without sowing the seeds of a fresh crop of misery for the next generation. Instead of worshipping, and teaching others to worship, a past that was never present, they will study the methods whereby the most provident and self-restrained of the working classes are already enabled to effect their own emancipation, with a view to adopting the same methods for the emancipation of a much larger number, if not of the whole body. Those who believe in Democracy will not regard this as too ambitious an aim for Democratic statesmanship; but, if this be too ambitious an aim, then how utterly vain is the vision of a Socialistic millennium! For the Socialistic transformation of a free people, like the English, into a vast Trades-Union composed of a single class, would demand for its achievement a degree of intelligence little short of omniscience, and a revolutionary force little short of omnipotence; while the maintenance of such a system would require an infinitely higher order of public virtues in the whole community than would suffice, under the present system, to secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number in a sense far beyond the shallow counsels of Socialistic perfection.

THE SOCIALISTIC TENDENCIES OF  
MODERN DEMOCRACY<sup>1</sup>

*N.B.—Some arguments and expressions in this Address are  
borrowed from the two foregoing Articles.*

I HAVE undertaken to address you to-night on one of the gravest and most practical questions that can engage the attention of such an audience on the opening of a new Parliament, elected, for the first time, by universal household suffrage. It is the question whether the Socialistic tendencies which all must recognise in modern Democracy are to be accepted as irresistible, or treated as capable of being checked and guided; how far they are favourable, and how far adverse, to social progress, in its highest sense; and what attitude towards them should be adopted by one who is neither a theorist nor an agitator, but simply desires to promote the happiness of men, women and children—the supreme object of true statesmanship. In approaching this question, I do not propose to occupy your time by labouring to show that we are actually face to face with the perils and the responsibilities, the privileges and the aspirations, of Democratic government. I regard the Reform Act of last year as having crowned and consummated the effect of causes long in operation, and as having converted the British Constitution into a Democracy, conducted under monarchical forms and not without aristocratic safeguards, but still a genuine and typical Democracy. Henceforth, the ultimate control of national policy is lodged, if not in the whole people, yet in the heads of households and a very large body of non-

<sup>1</sup> An Address delivered at the Birmingham and Midland Institute on February 8, 1886, and reprinted from *Macmillan's Magazine*.

householders in town and country; while electoral power is so distributed as to leave few, if any, breakwaters of personal influence to stand out athwart the current of the popular will. This is Democracy—the government of the people by the people; and as modern Democracy visibly moves in a Socialistic direction, it is well that we should clearly realise the nature and probable results of that movement—at least, so far as concerns this country.

When I attribute Socialistic tendencies to Democracy, as it is now established in England, I desire to limit the meaning of the word ‘Socialism’ for the purpose of our present inquiry. Let us at once dismiss from consideration the wild and criminal schemes of foreign Nihilists and Anarchists, which are incompatible with the existence of organised society, whether on the basis of Socialism or on that of individual liberty. Such projects have found little acceptance in England, and are not even countenanced by the Socialistic programme of the Democratic Federation.<sup>1</sup> The grand object of that programme was described by Mr. Hyndman, in his discussion with Mr. Bradlaugh, as ‘an endeavour to substitute for the anarchical struggle or fight for existence an organised co-operation for existence.’ This is as plausible as it is vague; but, as Mr. Bradlaugh pointed out, the means proposed for the achievement of this object are the abolition and destruction of individual property; if possible, by argument; if not, by force. Not only does the Democratic Federation distinctly advocate the so-called ‘nationalisation’ of railways and shipping, but it adopts the plan shamelessly expounded in the well-known treatise of Mr. Henry George on ‘Progress and Poverty’ for the nationalisation of land *without respect for vested interests*. ‘By the apostles of agrarian plunder,’ says Mr. Goldwin Smith, ‘it is proposed to confiscate, either openly, or under the thin disguise of the taxing power, every man’s freehold—even the farm which the settler has just

<sup>1</sup> A few hours before this Address was delivered the West End of London was the scene of a disgraceful riot, attended by pillage, consequent on a meeting of Social Democrats held in Trafalgar Square.

reclaimed by the sweat of his own brow from the wilderness. And it is emphatically added, with all the exultation of insolent injustice, that no compensation is to be allowed. That the State has, by the most solemn and repeated guarantees, ratified private proprietorship and undertaken to protect it, matters nothing; nor even that it has itself recently sold the land to the proprietor, signed the deed of sale, and received the payment. That such views can be propounded anywhere but in a robber's den or a lunatic asylum, still more, that they can find respectful hearers, is a proof that the economical world is in a state of curious perturbation.'

Happily, the Socialistic tendencies of English Democracy have not yet been forced into the grooves carved out by Mr. Henry George or the Democratic Federation. Widespread as they are, they have never shaped themselves into a creed, nor is it by any means easy to bring within the compass of any one definite conception the various Socialistic ideas now floating in the Democratic atmosphere. We are bound, however, to make the effort, and perhaps we may best realise the nature of the Socialism which now claims our allegiance in this country by clearly identifying the ideas against which it is a protest. One of these ideas is the so-called *laissez-faire* principle; that is, the principle which regards the free play of individual liberty as the best security for the good of society, and State intervention as an evil only to be justified by extreme necessity. Another is the principle of proprietary right, which, in its extreme form, treats property as a creature of Nature or of Providence rather than of human law, and condemns legislative restrictions of it, for the supposed interest of the community, not only as inexpedient, but as unjust. A third is the principle according to which competition, and not co-operation, is the soundest mainspring of human progress, and the best regulator of social life. The popular Socialism of the present day is the negation and antithesis of these ideas. It embraces a great variety of theories, but its aspirations are specially directed towards equalising the distribution of wealth in the community, by means of direct



State interference with freedom of contract and individual proprietorship. This is the form of Socialism which I have in view to-night when I proceed to examine the 'Socialistic Tendencies of Democracy.' No doubt the phrase has been loosely applied, by friends as well as by foes, to many other Democratic measures, some of which have already been adopted by Parliament. But a little consideration will show that most of these are derived from entirely distinct principles, and that our proposed definition embraces nearly all the claims of legislative reform now current, which directly conflict with the rights of liberty and property, as hitherto understood.

1. For instance, a whole series of Acts in our Statute-book is directed to check monopolies and privileges of various kinds, commercial and otherwise. Such monopolies and privileges are inconsistent with the industrial equality dear to Socialists, but they are equally inconsistent with the industrial liberty dear to anti-Socialists; and the policy which prohibits them is dictated, not by a desire to increase the protective sphere of State interference, but, on the contrary, by a desire to set free individual competition. These Acts, therefore, are the reverse of Socialistic. Again, the substitution of equal division for the law of Primogeniture, as the rule of descent for landed property on intestacy, would be in no respect a Socialistic reform. It would tend, indeed, so far as it operated, to equalise the possession of landed property in the community—which is a quasi-Socialistic object; but it would involve no interference, direct or even indirect, on the part of the State, with freedom of disposition.

2. These are instances in which the distribution of wealth is more or less affected by legislation, which, however, cannot be truly described as Socialistic, because it does not restrict individual liberty. But there are other instances in which the word 'Socialistic' is erroneously applied to measures which do, indeed, more or less, restrict individual liberty, but do not affect either the action of competition or the distribution of wealth. Such are the Sanitary Acts and the Education Acts. The principle of these Acts is no more

Socialistic than the principle of the old Common Law, which is, in fact, the principle of all law. The old Common Law prohibited nuisances, and gave every man a right to prosecute a neighbour who should pollute his well or injure the health of his family by neglect of drainage, though it did not actually legalise drainage-rates and water-rates. On the other hand, at Common Law every able-bodied man was liable to be called out for compulsory military service. In these days military service is voluntary, while taxation for drainage and water-supply is compulsory: but the principle is exactly the same, and the object in both cases is not the equalisation of fortunes, but the good of the community. Still more emphatically may this be said of the Education Acts. Assuredly it was not the poorer classes who clamoured for education to be given to them at the expense of the rich. On the contrary, the movement came from above. It was the State that, for its own purposes, compelled the poorer classes to have their children educated, and to forego their earnings, however unwilling they might be to do so; and even to pay school-fees, except where extreme destitution could be pleaded. It is a very serious question whether, in enforcing this obligation, the State was not bound to go a step further and to establish free schools; but, at all events, a system which lays a heavy burden on the poor for a public object which few of them appreciate cannot justly be called Socialistic. No doubt, the larger proportion of sanitary and education rates is paid by those who derive less direct benefit from them; but this result is accidental; and, if this be Socialism, it must be Socialism to levy taxes for keeping up prisons from honest men who are never likely to be lodged in gaol.

3. For like reasons, we cannot regard as Socialistic the numerous measures which have been passed of late years for the protection of various classes, whether or not they encroach on freedom of contract, if they do not attempt to enrich one man at the expense of another. If the Factory Laws enacted that women and children should only work half-time, but should be paid for full-time, such an enactment, futile as it

might be, would be clearly Socialistic. So, too, would be an Employers' Liability Act declaring that no deduction should be made from the wages of any workman by reason of the new liability thereby imposed upon the employer; or an Artisans' Dwelling Act forbidding more than a certain low rent to be demanded from each family occupying a tenement. But there are no such provisions in the actual Factory Acts, or the Employers' Liability Act, or the Artisans' Dwelling Act; and they do not become Socialistic merely because their aim is protective, or their effect levelling. All remedial Acts must needs benefit most those weak and struggling classes for whose relief they are designed; and all impartial taxation must needs extract a larger contribution per head from the rich than from the poor. But this is not Socialism; and, if it were, no Christian government would be possible except on a Socialistic basis. It is a fallacy, countenanced alike by cunning advocates of Socialism and by partisans of the Liberty and Property Defence League, that every legislative restraint of individual liberty is, in its essence, Socialistic. From this point of view, we can only escape from Socialism by letting every man do that which is right in his own eyes, regardless of his neighbour; and not only commercial protection, but all protection, is but a practical application of the Socialistic gospel. No wonder that Socialism, obscured by such a confusion of thought, should appear as the inseparable companion of modern Democracy. For it is now self-evident that, however sound within the sphere of exchange, the free play of individual liberty and interest cannot satisfy all the requirements of humanity and justice recognised by Democracy. We must get beyond it, in various directions, and if getting beyond it in any direction amounts to Socialism, then we must all be Socialists.

Having thus glanced at some examples of remedial legislation miscalled Socialistic, let us consider a single typical example of truly Socialistic legislation, the nature of which is seldom realised—I mean the English Poor Law. If society, and not individuals, were responsible for bringing children

into the world—if the State could rigorously limit the number of its citizens and regulate their industry—it would naturally undertake the burden of maintaining the sick and decrepit, unless, indeed, it should enforce thrift by a system of compulsory national insurance. Inasmuch, however, as marriage is free to all, and no check is or can be placed on the increase of population, a law which guarantees to every newcomer, however unwelcome, a bare subsistence at least, and protects him, at the expense of others, against the proper consequences of his own improvidence, vice, or crime, is pure Socialism and nothing else. To levy rates upon struggling workpeople for the support of worthless idlers and their children, legitimate or illegitimate, is a deliberate interference of the State with the action of natural laws in the lowest stratum of the community, and results in impoverishing the worthier to save from starvation, if not to enrich, the less worthy. Yet this law, dating from an age in which the name of Socialism was unknown, is consecrated by public opinion and the usage of three centuries, nor could it be repealed without shocking our sense of humanity. But if the Poor Law itself be Socialistic in principle, what are we to say of the claims sometimes preferred on behalf of those who happen to inhabit certain overcrowded quarters of London? It may be well to state these claims nakedly and without disguise. ‘Here,’ it is urged, ‘are so many thousands of us living upon a certain area; we claim the right to remain there, for we do not mean to migrate, nor yet to emigrate, still less to go into the workhouse. We further claim the right to multiply at our own discretion, and it is possible that we may be reinforced by new settlers pressing in from the country, especially if Government should comply with our demand. That demand is that, however numerous we may become, jostling each other like rabbits in a warren, and however little our labour may be required, a sufficient maintenance and decent homes shall be provided for all of us, at the cost of the community, not elsewhere, but on this very spot, to which by our own free-will we are rooted.’ Of course, the bare statement of

such a claim is its best refutation, but the fact that something very like this has been seriously advanced is a fact that cannot be ignored in discussing the 'Socialistic Tendencies of Democracy.' It remains to determine the sources of these tendencies as we now see them in operation, to examine some of the legislative proposals to which they have given birth, and to consider how far they ought to be encouraged or resisted by a wise statesman.

One thing is certain. The Socialism now imported into English politics is essentially English, and of essentially modern origin. It has little in common with the paternal despotism of the State under the ancient republics or feudal monarchies—a despotism of which some traditions survive in the combination of Democracy with State-control on the continent of Europe. Though English Democracy is much less Socialistic than French or German Democracy, it must be confessed that most of the external causes which favour the spread of modern Socialism have operated with peculiar intensity in England.<sup>1</sup> . . . But the Socialistic tendencies of our new Democracy are not merely the product of such external causes as these. They also represent a profound reaction against that faith in individual rights and individual freedom which has governed the ideas of most political reformers in England since the days of Adam Smith, and has been re-asserted, in an extreme form, by the Liberty and Property Defence League. It is not so much that men have again begun to idolise, as they once did, the collective wisdom of the State, as such, or to maintain its capacity to preside, like an earthly Providence, over the social life of its citizens. It is, rather, that large classes of individual citizens, and especially those who have most to gain by change, are eager to employ the powerful machinery of Government now placed within their grasp for the redress of their supposed grievances and the attainment of their favourite objects. It is felt, and not without reason, that individuality and free competition, the struggle for existence and the law of supply and demand,

<sup>1</sup> See the last Article, on 'Democracy and Socialism,' p. 190.

have now had a full trial, and have failed to produce the happiness or contentment which their earlier advocates expected of them. It is believed that all which could be gained, in the long run, by the action of these principles, at the cost of infinite waste and suffering, may be gained far more speedily and surely by co-operation and organisation, and that without any countervailing loss. It is hoped that, by some fortunate adjustment of providential laws, the harvest of liberty may be reaped without sowing, and the benefits of State protection secured without the sacrifice of personal energy and independence.

I have endeavoured to show elsewhere how these Socialistic forces, material and moral, have been happily tempered in England by a multitude of modifying influences—such as the national sense of humanity and justice, the wide diffusion of charity, both private and public, the right of public meeting, the freedom of the Press, the general recognition of promotion by merit, the absence of conscription, the infinite development of association on lines ever crossing and intersecting class-divisions, the kindly intercourse between gentle and simple in country districts, and the sacred traditions of family life in the English home. To these and other like characteristics of English society we probably owe our immunity from those violent and Communistic forms of Socialism which have occasionally broken out into volcanic eruption on the Continent. For, let it be observed, once for all, that Communistic Socialism is one thing, Constitutional Socialism is another. Communistic Socialism aims at levelling down by confiscating all private fortunes, abolishing the institution of property, and destroying all motive for personal industry; Constitutional Socialism aims at levelling up, and purports to conserve all the vigour of individual activity, and even to respect legitimate property, while it seeks to cripple the excessive power of wealth by subjecting it to a constant process of depletion.

In order to estimate the lengths to which Socialistic ideas have been carried in practical schemes for Democratic legis-

lation in England, we cannot do better than review briefly some leading articles of the so-called 'Radical Programme,' a volume which has been widely circulated of late; not that it possesses the slightest authority, but that it contains a convenient repertory of the demands actually preferred, during the late election, on behalf of the new Democracy.

We may at once put aside, as foreign to our subject, those demands which relate to the payment of members, the abolition of the Upper House, the destruction of the Established Church, the Democratic reform of Local Government, and the creation of a National Council for Ireland. These demands may be reasonable and constitutional, or they may be revolutionary and mischievous; but there is nothing Socialistic in their principle. Almost the same may be said of the demand for free education; for though it may be advocated in a Socialistic tone, it is capable, as we have seen, of being supported by non-Socialistic arguments. But what are we to say of such proposals as those for confiscating and redistributing the revenues of the Church; for reforming the whole English system of land-tenure in the interest of tenants and labourers; for unsettling the whole basis of taxation in the interest of the *prolétariat*; for delegating to public bodies with sweeping powers the duty of housing the poor comfortably, and providing them with allotments; for the 'restitution' of land improperly inclosed, and for nationalising corporate property? Let us look at one or two of these proposals more closely, with a view to ascertain how far they are Socialistic in principle; whether or not they be defensible on independent grounds.

1. The proposed scheme for disendowing the Church rests on the assumption that Church property is State property, and may be re-appropriated by the State, from time to time, for the benefit of the whole nation. This assumption is not strictly accurate. True it is that the Church, as such, has no personality and no property of its own, though it consists of many thousand corporations, each of which holds property. But the same rule applies equally to endowed charities; and

it would be more correct to say that all corporate property, ecclesiastical or otherwise, is held, and always has been held, at the disposal of the State, with exceptions in favour of vested interests and modern endowments. The Church of Christ is a spiritual body, unknown to law; but the Church of England is a creation of the law, and it is the law alone which secures parochial revenues to clergymen of the Anglican communion, excluding Roman Catholic priests—whose tenets are more in harmony with those of the original donors—and Nonconformist ministers, who decline episcopal ordination. It would be a Socialistic measure to seize all these revenues, without compensation to living incumbents or patrons, and divide them among the ministers of all denominations, or among the ratepayers of England. It would be a scarcely less Socialistic measure to confiscate endowments bestowed on the National Church by private donors, without also confiscating those bestowed under like conditions, and within the same limits of time, on other religious communions. Subject, however, to such reservations, whatever may be said against disendowment on religious or political grounds, there would be no Socialism in applying public Church property, inherited from bygone ages, with due regard for vested interests, to any purpose of national utility.

2. Several of the popular schemes of agrarian reform are far more distinctively Socialistic, and far less defensible on principles of justice. This Socialistic bias in dealing with questions relating to land is the more remarkable because an exactly opposite bias is characteristic of Continental Socialism. In France, for instance, it is capital invested in trade against which all the attacks of Socialism are directed. In the forcible language of Mr. Goldwin Smith, 'Capital, spelt with a big initial letter, swells into a malignant giant—the personal enemy of Labour; spelt in the natural way, it is simply that with which Labour starts on any enterprise, and without which no labour can exist at all, unless it be that of the savage grubbing roots with his nails.' On the other hand, among French Socialists, property in land is not only tole-



rated, but respected. No one proposes to alter the articles in the Code Napoléon which regulate land-tenure; and these articles, while they compel subdivision on death, are otherwise founded on the strictest principles of contract. This contrast between the views of French and English Radicals in regard to land is most significant, and admits of a very simple explanation. In France, the landowners are reckoned by millions, and no man dares to propose despoiling them; in England, they are reckoned by thousands, and many of them are rich enough to offer a tempting bait for Socialistic cupidity. The authors of the 'Radical Programme' are shrewd enough to see through the enormous fallacies which underlie Mr. George's scheme for 'nationalising' land, and point out that it could only be worked by a long series of wholesale confiscations. But they do not see the equally palpable fallacies which underlie their own schemes of philanthropic robbery, veiled under the specious name of 'restitution.' They tacitly assume that every man has a right to marry when he pleases, whether or not he possesses the means to maintain children; and that every child so born into the world has a right, not to maintenance and free education only, but to a slice of his native soil (perhaps 'three acres and a cow')—not against his parents, who are responsible for his existence, but against society, which, if it could, would have prevented his coming into the world at all. They assume that the present generation of English labourers inherits the rights and the wrongs of the old English peasantry, and can justly claim the restoration of lands from which their forefathers are supposed to have been ousted—as if many of them were not descended from landless serfs, others from town-artisans, others from the very landlords who are held up to obloquy as oppressors; while, if their hereditary right were admitted, they would have to share their patrimony with millions of cousins who are now peopling the continents of America and Australia. They assume, conversely, that nearly all landowners derive their title from a line of ancestors, and are rolling in ill-gotten wealth; whereas a very

large proportion of them have purchased their estates out of trade earnings, or are the sons of those who so purchased them; and many thousands of the rest would now be in rags if they were living on their rentals alone, and are actually subsidising their landed property out of other sources of income. They assume—as it was assumed by those simple people who killed the goose that laid the golden eggs—they assume that, after destroying the security of landed property and the mutual confidence between the classes engaged in agriculture, capital would flow into agriculture more freely than ever, and all the fruits which spring from security and confidence would be enjoyed in still greater abundance.

To refute such assumptions as these would be to give elementary lessons in moral philosophy and political economy; yet upon them are based Socialistic doctrines which have been widely accepted. For instance, when it is urged that house property in towns should be taken for purposes of improvement at less than its market value, it is seldom realised how much of this property belongs to struggling men who have invested their savings in it, and might be half ruined by its partial confiscation. When the demolition of illegal enclosures on common-land is loudly demanded, it is forgotten how many of such encroachments have been made by poor squatters, whose children or grandchildren are now living upon them in perfect innocence; and it is also forgotten how many popular rights stand or fall with these very rules of prescription which are so lightly swept aside. When 'fair rents' and 'free sale' are advocated in the same breath as cardinal points of the new agricultural charter, it is not perceived that 'free sale' must inevitably kill 'fair rent'—that is, that on the next transfer of a tenancy under 'free sale,' the price to be paid by the incoming tenant will be large in proportion as the rent is low, and the interest upon that sum, together with the 'fair rent,' must needs amount to a full rack-rent. When 'fixity of tenure' is propounded in another clause of the same charter, it is not only overlooked that one-sided fixity of tenure is unjust—that a

tenant ought not to have a right of remaining on a farm, unless the landlord has a corresponding right of keeping him there; it is also overlooked that a landlord may happen to be poor, and a tenant may happen to be rich, in which case Dives would be quartered on the homestead of Lazarus, at a minimum rent, and without the possibility of being removed.

These are but specimens of the unreasoning injustice into which men who desire to be reasonable and just are hurried by the shallow logic of Socialism, by which the 'Radical Programme' is largely tainted. 'The problem,' we are told, 'is how to make life worth living for those to whom it is now a prolonged misery.' The one solution proposed, under various forms, is the impoverishment of those who have for the benefit of those who have not; and the authors appear blind to all but the momentary relief which might be thus obtained. Perhaps they never heard of Bastiat's famous discourse on 'That which is Seen, and that which is not Seen.' They see, at least in imagination, free schools all over the country supported out of the revenues of a disendowed Church. What they do not see is the gradual extinction of numberless charitable agencies now centred in the parish clergyman and his family, or the diversion of numberless subscriptions from their present objects for the support of the minister deprived of his tithes. They see the immediate advantage to accrue from the expropriation of A. and the taxation of B. for the purpose of erecting C. into a peasant proprietor. What they do not see, is the difficulty of *keeping* C. a peasant proprietor, of saving him from the hands of the money-lender, and of preventing him from letting his land at an extortionate rent to some more enterprising or industrious neighbour. They see the arguments—and they are very strong—in favour of a graduated income tax, as encouraging a more equal distribution of wealth in the country. What they do not see, is its tendency to check the accumulation of capital, the sole reservoir of wages, or the utter impossibility of limiting such a principle, if it were once introduced. They see the palpable blessings which might be realised by a liberal expenditure out

of the rates for the benefit of the most destitute class. What they do not see, is the burden thereby imposed on the poorer ratepayers, themselves on the brink of pauperism, or the certainty of improvidence and over-population being stimulated by the diminution of the motives for industry. They see the evils incident to individual ownership of land and unrestricted competition in trade or manufacture. What they do not see, is the risk of colossal jobbery and mismanagement in the corporate ownership of land, the hardship to consumers involved in restrictions on trade or manufactures, or the paralysis of individual enterprise sure to ensue; though all of these consequences have been amply demonstrated by past experience. In a word, the views of Socialistic reformers, though honest, are eminently narrow and short-sighted. They are impatient of those slow, but sure, processes which have their counterpart in Nature, and by which economical laws, no less than physical laws, vindicate themselves in 'the long run.' The very idea of 'the long run' is repulsive to them, since their sole aim is to meet the pressure of present exigencies. As for the future, they are content to leave it to grapple with the ruin which they would bequeath to it; and as for the past, they confidently but ignorantly appeal to it as attesting the failure of the *laissez-faire* system, of which they speak as if it were an evil power, knowing nothing of the miseries which preceded the development of it.

But is there really no alternative between this system and the crude Socialistic proposals to which the new Democracy lends so ready an ear? This is a question which every statesman ought now to ask himself, and which, happily, admits, if not of a conclusive, yet of a definite, answer. Between the principle of absolute non-intervention and the revolutionary principle of meddlesome interference with individual freedom, lies the whole sphere of legislative evolution and constructive reform. A single example, already noticed, will illustrate the direction which such legislation may take. More than forty years ago the national conscience was shocked by revelations of over-work on miserably small wages, espe-

cially among women and children, in factories. Had the Legislature adopted short-sighted counsels, it might have attempted to fix a minimum rate of wages, at so much per hour, leaving the workpeople to fix their own number of hours. In this attempt it would assuredly have failed, and might very probably have aggravated the evil to be cured. Instead of this, it left wages to regulate themselves, and limited the hours of work, nominally for women and children, but incidentally for all factory-workers. The result has been, on the whole, economically successful, as well as beneficial to health and morals; actually showing that a greater product, with better profits and higher wages, may be obtained from reduced hours of work. Here the Legislature wisely anticipated the operation of natural laws, and saved an important class of the population the necessity of working out its own salvation at a great cost of needless suffering. A similar lesson may be learned from the history of the Poor Law. When the Poor-Law relief was so administered as to be practically a rate in aid of wages, and able-bodied men were pensioned off at the expense of their neighbours, the rural labourers were pauperised and demoralised by it; when the workhouse test was firmly but judiciously enforced, not only was thrift encouraged, but the standard of wages was sensibly raised. What such examples show is that legislation which may be called Socialistic is not always mischievous; but that it needs a high order of statesmanship to distinguish between the cheap form of State intervention which defeats its own object, and the rarer form which, like the art of the skilful physician, aids and strengthens the remedial forces of Nature. Those who still idolise 'the State' would do well to ask themselves what 'the State' really is; and how it is possible for it to possess any wisdom beyond that which it derives from the individuals who constitute it. They would then discover that, after all, the object of their worship is not a Supreme, nor even a Superior, being, but only a convenient expression for Ministers, parliamentary representatives and officials, more or less capable and more or less public-spirited, but

creatures of like passions with ourselves, quite as fallible, more open to motives of jobbery, and far less competent to manage property than individual owners personally looking after their own affairs on the spot, knowing their own wants and studying their own interests. Having realised this, once for all, they could not fail to see why the presumption should always be in favour of individual liberty; subject, however, to many necessary exceptions. Of course, no strict rules can be laid down for determining in what cases it may be wise to set aside this presumption, and to substitute legislative compulsion for the law of liberty. But there are some principles which may help to guide us, and to save us from delusive projects for regenerating society without regenerating the units of which it is composed.

Foremost among these principles is a scrupulous regard for justice between man and man. It may possibly be right, for instance, to regulate agricultural tenancies by law; but it cannot possibly be right to frame a one-sided code of regulations—to enable a tenant to get his rent reduced without his landlord's consent, but to disable the landlord from getting it raised without his tenant's consent. It may be right, because for the public good, to facilitate the hiring, or even the purchase, of small plots by cottagers, through the agency of village corporations; but it cannot be right to give A.B. the power of claiming 'restitution' from C.D., on the absurd plea that A.B. *may* be descended from some one who *may* have been evicted, several generations ago, by some one else who *may* have been the remote ancestor of C.D. It may be right to recognise the fact that, in past ages, the interests of peasants and artisans were too much neglected by a Parliament composed of the landed and commercial aristocracy, not out of ill-will or selfishness, but out of pure ignorance; and that, in order to make up arrears of reform in a Democratic sense, some knots must be cut which never ought to have been tied. But it cannot be right to redress unconscious class-legislation in the past by wilful and deliberate class-legislation in the present. It may be right to pave the way

by well-advised measures for a more equal distribution of fortunes in the near future ; but it cannot be right to rob Peter to pay Paul, to strip men of property honestly acquired under the guarantee of the law, and to consecrate a new era of Equality and Fraternity, without Liberty, by a flagrant breach of public faith.

Happily, no such violation of morality is involved in the advance of Democracy, if only it be wisely led—not in the spirit of Cleon, but in that of Pericles. During the blood-stained rule of the Paris Commune, two ideas, essentially distinct, were persistently confounded—the idea of *Communism*, and the idea of *Communalism*. The Communal idea, instead of being radically opposed to individuality, is really the extreme assertion of local individuality, and the right of self-government, against the central authority. The Communistic idea is, logically, the negation of all individuality, and especially of the individual right to property. Now, it is the former idea, and not the latter, which is in harmony with the best and deepest instincts of modern Democracy. The pride of citizenship, as it was felt in ancient Athens, and as it is now felt in the United States, not only does not foster Communistic sentiment, but is actually an antidote to it. Hence it is that America, though it is the favourite trial-ground of social experiments, is very little affected by the doctrines of Socialism, and still less by those of Communism. In proportion as a true manly self-respect is developed in a nation or in a class, the sense of weakness out of which springs the gregarious craving for State protection will gradually die out, and give place to nobler aspirations. True Democracy will not long tolerate false Socialism ; for true Democracy asserts, what false Socialism denies, the supremacy and independence of the individual soul. Not only in the material universe, but in the realm of social and political speculation, the poet's words are still as true as ever :—

Though world on world in myriad myriads roll,  
 Round us, each with differing powers,  
 And other forms of life than ours,—  
 What know we greater than the soul ?

Democracy in its infancy may trifle with Socialism, and use it, so to speak, as a plaything; but full-grown Democracy will be far more likely to insist, with John Stuart Mill, on the indefeasible rights of each man's free-will, except where they come into direct collision with the no less sacred rights of other men's free-will. It will submit to limitations imposed by an authority responsible to itself, for the sake of securing the greatest happiness of the greatest number; but it will be very impatient of restrictions imposed by an authority so far removed from its own control as a Central Government or a National Committee of Lands and Public Works. In other words, it will be Communalistic, but it will not be Communistic.

The Socialistic tendencies of Democracy, then, are not to be condemned or resisted as evil in themselves, but only as needing wise and statesmanlike guidance. They are mischievous, if they encourage a felonious craving for other men's property; they are beneficial, if they inspire honest efforts to combine Liberty with Equality and Fraternity. They are delusive, so far as they spring from a superstitious faith in an imaginary State above all the prejudices and weaknesses of human nature, infallible in its judgment, and incorruptible in its action; they are worse than delusive, so far as they call upon this earthly Providence not to deliver us from, but, on the contrary, to gratify, the passions of envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. But they are sound and healthy, so far as they foster an earnest and robust faith in self-government, as a means of securing higher ends than mere national defence or internal police. The cynical view of human affairs which led Goethe and the First Napoleon to despise all schemes of 'world bettering' can have, and ought to have, no place in a Democratic age. Political co-operation may effect much good which could never be attained through a mere struggle for existence among individuals; and the community has the power of largely improving the material and moral condition of its members. Only we must never forget that, after all, civilisation is the creation of in-



dividual energy, and that it is the character of the individual members which must determine the character of the community. No arbitrary transfer of property, no organisation of industry, no artificial creation of social equality, can supply the place of intelligence, of temperance, of integrity, of self-restraint, or of public spirit; and the Socialistic Utopia demands for its maintenance a diffusion of the Christian virtues such as has never yet been witnessed in the history of mankind. It is vain to expect of Democratic statecraft that which is the proper task of morality and religion; and if the lessons taught on the hills of Galilee two thousand years ago had been laid to heart by the human race, there would be little need or room for the doctrines of modern Socialistic reformers. For these doctrines, so far as they are true, are little more than an application of Gospel precepts to social politics; and if Democracy, rising above the selfish counsels of demagogues, should ever seek to realise its own highest ideal, it will do well to seek inspiration, not from the borrowed light of Socialism, but from the original light of Christianity itself.



IV

IRISH POLICY



## HOME RULE AND JUSTICE TO IRELAND

*A Letter to the Editor of 'THE TIMES,' May 1886*

SIR,—There is a question which surely lies at the root of the Home Rule problem, but which seems to have been hitherto strangely neglected. It is the question whether, apart from all Imperial considerations, Ireland is fit to govern herself, and whether the concession of Home Rule would be a real benefit to her people or, on the contrary, the greatest wrong which Great Britain could inflict upon them. In discussing this question, abstract theories are worthless. It is worse than vain to argue with a man who regards all nations as equally capable of self-government, and studiously ignores all the facts which prove that some nations lack the primary conditions upon which self-government depends for its success. Those who propose a repeal of the Union, and a reversal of the policy which all parties in the State have maintained since the beginning of this century, are bound to justify their action by reasons derived from experience. What light, then, does experience throw on the capacity of Ireland for Home Rule?

The failure of 'Grattan's Parliament' is admitted on all hands; but it is alleged that no fair inference can be drawn from that experiment, since Grattan's Parliament represented only the Protestant minority, and was largely composed of mere nominees. I allow this allegation, though I wish I could believe that a Parliament mainly returned by the National League would be more honest, enlightened, and public-spirited, than Grattan and his Protestant associates. The utter profligacy of Irish rule in American cities is equally

notorious; but it may perhaps be explained away by reference to some peculiarity in the American atmosphere. Let us, then, resort to other tests, and ask ourselves how far the conduct of popular and elective bodies in Ireland encourages us to entrust an Irish Legislature with an absolute control of Irish affairs. No one disputes the capacity of Irishmen for the discharge of public duties. Mr. Gladstone lays great stress on the loyalty and courage of the Irish constabulary, to whom he might have added the Irish judges and resident magistrates. But it happens that all these officials are non-elective, and, like Irish officers in the Army, hold their commissions from the Imperial Crown; for which reason Mr. Gladstone proposes ultimately to dispense with their services. We must look elsewhere for examples of Irish management as it would be under a system of Home Rule. In Ireland, as in England, there are three important administrative areas—the County, the Union, and the Municipality. In the County, the chief local authority is the Grand Jury, a very anomalous body, mainly nominated by the High Sheriff, and anything but representative. This body, since it largely consists of more or less independent gentlemen, is admitted to do its work honourably and efficiently, even by those who most violently—and not unreasonably—condemn its constitution. It would, of course, disappear under Home Rule. In the Union, the local authority is the Board of Guardians, partly consisting of magistrates, sitting *ex officio*, partly of elective members. In the Corporate Towns, the local authority is the Town Council, entirely consisting of elective members. Can any man who knows Ireland point to Irish Boards of Guardians and Town Councils as favourable, or as otherwise than deterrent, examples of Irish self-government? Are not their proceedings constantly disgraced by rowdiness, jobbery, and sedition? Do not many of them act shamelessly as committees of the National League, making a predatory use of their rating powers, prostituting their patronage to subsidise Nationalist agents, and getting rid of chairmen who object to abuse their functions by putting disloyal resolu-

tions? Is there any improvement in these respects, or, rather, has there not been a steady degeneracy in proportion as the Irish gentry have been overborne or driven out by the creatures of the National League? In a word, could any man who has ever filled the office of Irish Secretary contemplate without dismay the creation of an Irish Legislature resembling the Irish Boards of Guardians and Town Councils?

But it is said that self-government has been hitherto applied on too modest a scale, and it is suggested that what has been so noxious in small doses might prove a sovereign remedy if administered wholesale. I might be content to ask what conceivable reason can be produced in support of so extravagant an assumption. I might dwell on the signal dearth in Ireland of all the social and commercial elements which might prevent Home Rule from lapsing into anarchy; on the want of any stable or substantial middle class; on the subservience of the priests to agitators who have the power of cutting off their means of subsistence; on the ruinous influence of a Press which stands alone in Europe for scurrilous mendacity, which propagates atrocious doctrines without reserve, and which has devoted itself for many years past to educating the people into lawlessness and violence. But all these objections, however powerful, are no more than illustrations of a broader and more fundamental objection to Irish Home Rule—that it is hopelessly inconsistent with Irish liberty, in any true sense of the word. For there can be no greater delusion than to confound national emancipation from British control with the enjoyment of individual independence in Ireland, or to imagine that an Irish peasant, relieved from British ‘coercion,’ would be free to act and vote according to his conscience. Coercion, indeed! Why, Ireland is now groaning under the most execrable form of coercion recorded in her history, and the despotism of Strafford or of Cromwell, though it may have been more imposing, was not so oppressive as the despotism of the National League. We are told, forsooth, that 85 per cent. of the Irish constituencies have declared in favour of National League candidates. Can we

doubt that if a *plébiscite* had been taken in Paris a few weeks before Robespierre's fall, 85 per cent. would have declared in favour of the great dictator and the 'Terror,' or that if a similar *plébiscite* had been taken a few days after his fall, 85 per cent. would have declared in favour of those who had the courage to put him down? Such is the value of *plébiscites* in communities where a tyrannical Convention rules supreme in the outraged name of Liberty. In a country where trial by jury is a farce if the criminal is a favourite of the dominant faction, and where political courage is an almost unknown virtue, what is the moral value of a popular verdict procured through the machinery of household suffrage? Indeed, household suffrage, like trial by jury itself, is an essentially English institution, for which Ireland is at present totally unfit, and which no one would have dreamed of extending to Ireland except upon the ground—urged again and again by the very men who are now for repealing the Union—that she was an integral and inseparable part of the United Kingdom. Disguise it as we may, there is no such thing as manly and intelligent public opinion in Ireland, and to consult the mass of the people on the question of Home Rule is much the same as to consult them on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. They are the victims, and a section of the Liberal party is the dupe, of a compact and perfectly unscrupulous conspiracy—a conspiracy organised and supported by foreign enemies of Great Britain, which has not shrunk from complicity with deeds of blood that shock humanity, and which has only been too successful in demoralising, not Irish peasants only, but English statesmen.

It is difficult to read without shame and indignation the apologies made for handing over the destinies of Ireland to men who have exhibited the worst features of Irish character, and made, too, by those who called Heaven to witness that they were incapable of being parties to a Kilmainham Treaty far less ignoble and disastrous. If we protest against Home Rule, we are challenged to produce an alternative, and reminded with insolent cynicism that, after the offer has once



been made by a leader of the Liberal Party, it will be almost hopeless to govern Ireland on any other terms. This is as if it were proposed to repudiate the National Debt, and those who resisted it were taunted with the question, 'What is your alternative? Will you repudiate half of it or three-quarters, and do you imagine that taxpayers, after being promised total repudiation, will ever be satisfied with anything less?' We are told, again, that if the Home Rule experiment should fail, which is admitted to be very possible, we shall retain all 'the resources of civilisation,' and can reduce Ireland to submission. What does this mean? It means that, being destitute of the courage, statesmanship, and public spirit to undertake a difficult task in government, we are to bequeath to our successors, not the same task, but one infinitely aggravated by our cowardice, and requiring a far higher effort of political virtue than we are now declining. We are assured that Home Rule is inevitable. Why 'inevitable,' except that politicians are slavishly bowing down to a political necessity of their own creation, instead of manfully resolving to act upon their real convictions? We are exhorted to make a final reparation for our cruel misgovernment of Ireland in the past by allowing her to govern—to misgovern—herself in the future. This appeal, which seems to impose on many persons ignorant of Irish history, bristles with so many fallacies that it deserves a separate examination.

It is false that all the evils of Ireland and faults of Irish character are the products of English misgovernment. For some three centuries after the so-called conquest of Ireland, that country, outside the English Pale, enjoyed the blessings of Home Rule. After the visit of John, no English king, except Richard II., set foot in Ireland for nearly five centuries; no English army, worthy of the name, except that of Richard II., crossed the Channel between the reign of Henry II. and that of Henry VIII.; while English law was practically confined to four counties. The result was, as it was sure to be, a state of savagery and disorder disgraceful to Christianity. From this state it was partially rescued by

the intervention of England, and those who trace all the miseries and vices of the people to confiscations made in the seventeenth century, and penal laws passed in the eighteenth, would do well to study contemporary descriptions of Ireland as it was in the sixteenth. However indefensible may have been the system of English rule in Ireland between the Rebellion of 1641 and the year 1782, it is none the less true that whatever civilisation or political institutions Ireland possesses it owes to England, and that since 1800 English policy towards Ireland, though often unwise, has been guided by the sincerest desire to promote the good of the country. But, even were it otherwise, how could past injustice be repaired by present injury, and how could Ireland fail to be injured by Home Rule if, as I contend, she is demonstrably unfit for it? Repentance is an excellent thing, but that is a cheap and mischievous form of penance which consists in vilifying our fathers and burdening our posterity by forcing a boon known to be fatal upon those to whom atonement is supposed to be due.

If atonement is really due at all, if Great Britain must needs reproach herself for wrongs done to Ireland, those wrongs have assuredly not been on the side of over-government, and cannot be redressed by leaving Ireland to anarchy. Having under our charge one of the most backward populations in Europe, richly endowed with intellectual and social virtues, but singularly deficient in the political virtues, we have persisted in dealing with it as if it needed no stronger government than Great Britain. We have declined to pay the priests, we have stickled, with pedantic obstinacy, for a make-believe unsectarian education, we have upheld the freedom of the Press and the right of public meeting, we have stiffly adhered to the dogmas of *laissez-faire* as concerns the development of Irish industries, we have established an uniform franchise throughout Great Britain and Ireland, and all because Ireland was an integral part of the United Kingdom, and must not be treated exceptionally. On the other hand, with ludicrous inconsistency, we have recognised the excep-

tional requirements of Ireland by abolishing the Irish branch of the Established Church; we have given Ireland a land-system, not only exceptional, but unique in its one-sided complication among the land-systems of the civilised world; we have rewarded murder and outrage in Ireland by enriching the class on whose behalf they were practised at the expense of that against which they were practised; and we listen with respect to demands from Ireland which, if they proceeded from England and Scotland, would be received with derision. It is this pitiful inconsistency—it is this imbecility and vacillation—in the Imperial government of Ireland which constitutes by far the gravest of all Irish grievances. ‘We have tried everything’—yes, ‘everything by turns, and nothing long.’ We have never tried a firm, just, and consistent policy. We pass Acts necessary for the protection of life and property (miscalled Coercion Acts) for periods skilfully contrived to elapse when the difficulty of renewing them shall be greatest, instead of fixing no time for their expiration, and leaving them to operate until they can be safely repealed. Our foremost statesman denounces the leaders of the Nationalist conspiracy as apostles of ‘public plunder,’ consigning some of them to Kilmainham Gaol, and then professes unlimited confidence in their patriotism and moderation. He invites all classes of Irishmen to co-operate harmoniously for the good of their common country, and in the same breath he invites the most capable and loyal class to expatriate itself on ruinous terms, lest it should be robbed by the majority. No! we have tried, it is true, every shift of time-serving expediency, but we have not tried far-sighted statesmanship, impartial justice, and a continuous enforcement of law and order.

This is the one inestimable benefit which Ireland cannot realise for herself, which Great Britain could bestow upon her, but which party spirit and popularity-hunting have as yet deterred us from granting her. Let men of both parties, not yet pledged to Home Rule, agree to withdraw Ireland, like India, from the ordinary sphere of party warfare; let the

aim of Parliament be, not to silence clamour, but to restore a sense of permanent security in Ireland; let us think more of protecting honest men in their rights than of reconciling irreconcilable enemies of the law; let us study Irish interests rather than Irish demands; and let this policy be maintained until the Irish nation shall have unlearned the evil lessons of the last few years. In other words, let us at last give Ireland what has always been the one thing needful for her—a strong Executive Government. Under the shelter of such a Government, it would be found possible to allow a much greater elasticity of administration, and even a much larger measure of local autonomy, than would otherwise be compatible with Imperial rule. But the maintenance of a continuous policy and a strong Government for Ireland certainly involves one serious difficulty, which some regard as insuperable. It would require a great sacrifice of party spirit to patriotism, and a vigorous display of that capacity for Empire by which England in times past won her place among the nations. This objection must be admitted; but does it not tell, with still greater force, against Home Rule? Will it require a less sacrifice of party spirit and less capacity for Empire to work a 'dog-collar union' with Ireland, under Mr. Gladstone's Bill, than to preserve the existing legislative Union and the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament? And, if Home Rule should fail, as fail it must under the control of Irish-American adventurers, will not the hasty concession of it be remembered in history as a consummation of the wrongs endured by Ireland at the hands of Great Britain, and may not the next generation of Irishmen rise up and curse us for it, with far better reason than can be shown by those who have so freely cursed us before?

I remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE C. BRODRICK.

Merton College, Oxford,  
May, 1886.

*THE GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND UNDER  
THE UNION*

*A Letter to the Editor of 'THE TIMES,' October 1886.*

SIR,—Those who have earnestly striven to defeat Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule policy, and are resolved to oppose the revival of it, ought now seriously to consider what principles should guide the Imperial Legislature in the government of Ireland under the Union. Not that any special obligation rests upon the opponents of Home Rule to devise what is called an alternative policy. The only alternative policy which they need propose is that policy to which Mr. Gladstone, in common with all British statesmen, had adhered during a political lifetime of more than fifty years, though he has at last abandoned it for an alliance with Mr. Parnell. No doubt, the fact of this alliance and the disastrous adoption by Mr. Gladstone's followers of a measure which few of them conscientiously approved, have infinitely increased the difficulty of governing Ireland as a part of the United Kingdom. But the difficulties of Irish government would not only have been great, they would have been insuperable, under a system of Home Rule which utterly failed to satisfy the Nationalistic demand, which involved incessant friction between the Imperial and the Irish Executive, which gave over the control of the police to a conspiracy eminently requiring to be kept under police supervision, which could not have been imposed upon Ulster without provoking civil war, and which must inevitably have led to Separation by a lingering process. No! the difficulties of Irish government are not the creation of the Unionists; they are not even the creation of the Home

Rulers, greatly as they have been aggravated by that section of the Liberal Party; they are the growth of centuries, and can only be overcome, if at all, by a remedial policy steadily maintained for more than one generation. The present question is, what that policy should be—always assuming that a decisive majority in the Imperial Parliament is capable of rising above the level of partisanship, and of studying, in the spirit of a single-minded lawgiver, the permanent interests of Ireland.

In approaching this question, it is of the first importance to grasp facts clearly, and to distinguish them from mere sentiments or aspirations. For instance, Irish nationality is an aspiration, but it has never been embodied in a fact. When Edward I. invaded Scotland, he made war upon a nation which had long been practically united under one king of its own, and when Scotland accepted union with England, it had still an independent national Constitution, though its sovereign also wore the Crown of England. When Henry II. was said to have conquered Ireland—which he never did conquer—he found no king of Ireland and no semblance of an Irish nation, but only a cluster of wild tribes, implacably hostile to each other, and living in a chronic state of anarchy, compared to which the Saxon Heptarchy was a harmonious empire.

Whatever sense of national unity and community of political interests may now exist in Ireland is not a survival of the past—a past which was never present—but the effect of English institutions slowly developed and extended throughout the island by Imperial agency. Having realised this fact, which is not without its bearing on the prospects of Home Rule, we have further to realise a second, and very unwelcome, fact—that Irishmen are singularly deficient in those simple political virtues upon which free institutions entirely depend for their success. It is childish to seek in misgovernment the cause of this inveterate deficiency; we might as well attribute to misgovernment the quick intelligence and native courtesy which make the Irish peasantry so attractive

to foreign visitors. What is certain is, that it has been apparently inherent in the Irish race ever since it emerged into history, that it was this which enabled a handful of Norman knights to overrun and overawe Ireland, that it was this which kept all Ireland outside the English Pale in a state of political and social barbarism during the three centuries before the Tudor monarchs undertook its pacification, and that this is recognised as a radical weakness of Irish character by every Englishman who has studied it since that epoch—by Edmund Spenser, by Sir John Davies, by Sir William Petty, by Swift, by Berkeley, by Arthur Young, and by the most friendly critics of Ireland in our own day. It may be convenient to ignore it for popularity-hunting ends, but the fact is patent that in the Irish national character, as we see it, there is a grievous lack of moral independence, of self-respect, of political courage, and, above all, of truthfulness. There is no such thing as public opinion in Ireland; what passes for it is manufactured to order by a Press whose most popular organs stand alone in Europe for scurrilous mendacity, by demagogues in the pay of American revolutionists, and by priests who exhibit sympathy with lawlessness and crime lest they should lose all hold over their flocks. Few of the Irish peasantry have ever heard or read the words of truth and soberness in regard to politics, and the successful policy of outrage-mongers, endorsed by English statesmen, has perverted such conceptions as they had before of public morality. If we look at the conduct of Irish elections, if we look at the gross jobbery which prevails in municipal and Poor-Law administration, if we look at the shameful venality and shameless dishonesty which impose on Irish popular opinion, we may well be tempted to despair of developing a healthy public spirit in a community so demoralised, and the words may perhaps rise before us—‘A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and My people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?’

But despair should find no place in the counsels of states-

men ; and, having once realised the facts, we have now to discover how to make the best of them. Let us study dispassionately, not the demands, but the wants of the Irish people ; not what remedies an Irish Legislature would apply, but what it ought to apply. The so-called demands of Ireland will assuredly never be satisfied, because they are carefully formulated by irreconcilable enemies of Great Britain, who have no desire to see them satisfied, treating each concession as blackmail extorted by fear and as a starting-point for a new agitation. But the real wants of Ireland deserve attentive consideration, and the more so, if the illusory demands of Ireland be firmly rejected. Nor must any British prejudice or conventional dogma be allowed to stand in the way of such a consideration. Now, one of these dogmas, repeated glibly on platforms in times past by those who now advocate Home Rule, and still repeated too often by Unionist speakers, is that Ireland is entitled to have all its institutions put on an exact equality with those of Great Britain—as if, by the way, there were no difference between English and Scotch institutions. Perhaps it might have been well if this policy of uniformity and complete amalgamation had been initiated at the Union, and gradually carried out by subsequent legislation. But it is needless to point out that a very opposite policy has been adopted for many years under Liberal Governments, and that of late especially the tendency has been to legislate for Ireland according to Irish ideas (as understood by Englishmen), and to make the contrast between English and Irish institutions more striking than ever. The Irish Church has been disestablished, though its establishment was a fundamental article of the Union, because the balance of creeds in Ireland differed so widely from that in Great Britain that its maintenance was held to be indefensible. The land-system of Ireland has been twice remodelled upon principles for which no precedent is to be found in the agrarian codes of Europe or America, and the last Irish Land Act has created a dual ownership of the very kind which successive law reforms have nearly abolished in England, while in Prussia it was



absolutely abolished by Stein and Hardenberg. And the argument which reconciled English politicians to this reactionary expedient was that Irish tenures were so unique, and Irish tenants so utterly helpless, that it was necessary to override freedom of contract and protect them against themselves. The Irish system of public education is not so purely Irish, and the bugbear of 'concurrent endowment' has prevented its being wisely adapted to Irish wants and circumstances. Still, it is far more denominational than would be tolerated by Liberal sentiment in England or Scotland, and very large sacrifices of this sentiment have been made to satisfy the claims of Irish Catholics in respect of secondary and University education. It is needless to add that Ireland has a police system of its own, and that no English statesman, except those who have gone over to Home Rule, has seriously advocated placing the Irish police under the control of the local authorities in counties and boroughs. It would be easy to multiply these instances of flagrant disparity between Irish and English institutions, and to show that all of them, except the peculiar organisation of the Irish police, have been introduced in deference to the plea that Irishmen must be governed in their own way—a plea strenuously urged by the same class of partisans who, in the same breath, clamour for the extension of every English privilege and institution to Ireland. It is too late to adopt this policy of assimilation, however salutary it might have been if adopted earlier. Having subverted the Church system, the land-system, and the educational system of Ireland, and reconstructed them on an Irish pattern, because Irishmen are unfit for the same institutions as Englishmen, we cannot, with a grave face, insist upon an identity of local government between the two countries because, forsooth, Irishmen are perfectly fit for the same institutions as Englishmen. The policy of assimilation and the policy of consulting the special wants of Ireland cannot stand together; we must definitely choose between them; and experience, as well as a regard for consistency, warns us that we must now elect the latter.

The one special want of Ireland which dominates all others is the need of security, and the very highest act of 'justice to Ireland' which the Imperial Parliament can bestow is the prompt and determined restoration of order. It is certain that no other Government in Europe, and least of all that of the United States, would have tolerated for a month the reign of terror which has paralysed all energy in Ireland, except the energy of crime, for several years past. If the Irish nation were mainly composed of robbers and assassins, it might doubtless be treated as tyrannical 'coercion'—from an Irish point of view—to put down robbery and assassination. But if the Irish nation is mainly composed of peaceable citizens, glad enough to live quietly, but without the moral courage to denounce a few handfuls of robbers and assassins, encouraged by the National League, and thus enabled to intimidate whole counties, the national wrong surely consists in the refusal to protect the sheep against the wolves. The victory of the National League over the law illustrates the truth of a remark made by Edmund Spenser 300 years ago: 'The Irishman, I assure you, fears the Government no longer than he is within sight or reach. No doubt strict discipline has been enforced by the League, and their success in criminal organisation has actually been quoted as a proof of Irish capacity for self-government. What it really proves is that Irishmen are best governed with a strong hand. They have been made to learn that it is far safer to defy the law than it is to defy the National League; and, until they are practically convinced of the contrary, the stronger power will command their allegiance.

There are those who, fully recognising the duty of re-establishing the security of life, property, and personal independence throughout Ireland, believe that, if the Lord-Lieutenancy were abolished, that paramount object would be promoted. I cannot share this opinion, and I have always regarded it as a redeeming feature of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill that it preserved the Lord-Lieutenancy, however thankless and unenviable that office would have become.

When its abolition was contemplated by Lord Russell and other Liberals of the old school, the measure recommended itself as part and parcel of the policy of assimilation, whereby the Irish Channel was to be gradually bridged over, and all badges of difference obliterated. That policy has now been abandoned for the counter-policy of special legislation for Ireland, and the abolition of the Viceroyalty would destroy, not only a standing monument of Imperial rule, but a valuable instrument for mediation between Irish and English opinion. Torrents of abuse have been poured upon 'the Castle' by Irish demagogues, and it is quite possible that some useful reforms might be introduced into Castle bureaucracy. But the broad fact remains that 'the Castle' really consists of a few officials, mostly both honest and able, far more accessible to Irish influences than Under-Secretaries or clerks at the Home Office, and traditionally disposed to modify Imperial instructions so as to conciliate Irish prejudices. The besetting sin of 'the Castle' is not its despotism, but its weakness, and if the principle of local self-government is to be extended in Ireland, it becomes vitally necessary to strengthen the power of the Central Executive, whether it be lodged in Dublin Castle or elsewhere. How this should be done with the least possible risk of abuse is a problem for those—of whom there are, happily, several belonging to both parties—who are practically familiar with Irish administration. One very obvious means of increasing the stability of this administration would be to separate the Viceroyalty of Ireland, like that of India, from the Government of the day, and to make it tenable for a certain number of years, which might be extended by re-appointment. Another method of reinforcing the Irish Executive, and at the same time of satisfying the reasonable demand for a semi-legislative tribunal in Dublin, would be to reconstitute the Irish Privy Council on a more representative basis, and to arm it with authority to deal with much of the Irish local business now transacted at Westminster. Advised by such a body, and under such other constitutional safeguards as may be thought necessary,

the Lord-Lieutenant might be properly entrusted with very large powers of proclaiming counties or smaller districts in which, after due warning, law and order should continue to be overborne by the rule of lawless violence. Suppose the proclaimed district to be a county, one effect of such a proclamation might be that the supreme command of the police force, as well as of Her Majesty's troops, within it, should pass into the hands of a military officer specially appointed for the purpose. Another effect might be that the Parliamentary representation of the county or county division should be suspended. Parliamentary representation assumes the existence of conditions under which citizens can act and vote freely. Where these conditions are absent—where juries dare not convict, where creditors dare not collect their debts, where farmers dare not take vacant farms or make their own terms with their landlords, where a secret conspiracy tyrannises over the minds and consciences of the whole community—Parliamentary elections are a perfect farce, and the so-called representatives are the delegates of the very body which the law ought to crush. It would be true mercy to suspend also the operation of trial by jury in proclaimed districts, and to substitute for it provisionally the jurisdiction of special commissions; but, in default of this, it might be sufficient to borrow from the Crimes Act the provisions for change of venue. A few examples of this kind might be expected to work miracles, unless, indeed, the conspirators were encouraged to believe that at any moment, under some time-serving impulse, the strong hand might be withdrawn. Let it be once understood throughout Ireland that, where the peace of counties cannot be secured by the ordinary processes of law, or by the action of law-abiding citizens, it shall be secured by the Executive power, but at no light sacrifice of civil rights, and the spell of the National League will be thenceforth broken. But this conviction will not be easily impressed on the popular mind after the evil lessons which have lately been taught it by successive Governments, and the application of such remedies will require a tenacity of purpose to

which we have long been strangers. On the other hand, let it never be forgotten that a greater tenacity of purpose and far higher efforts of political courage will be needed to reconquer Ireland, if Home Rule be granted, and produce its inevitable results in hostile Separation.

But though restoration of security must be the first object of a true statesman labouring to rescue Ireland from its present hopeless condition, it should not be his only or ultimate object. Given security and a Central Executive strong enough to suppress all rebellion and outrage, it would be safe and wise to govern Ireland more in accordance with Irish ideas than has been attempted since the Union. In the first place, it should be governed, so far as possible, through Irishmen. It is true that, since the most loyal and independent class has been almost driven out of the country, it is very difficult to find Irishmen capable of filling responsible positions bravely and impartially. It is true, also, that the one thoroughbred Irishman who has lately held the office of Permanent Secretary was brutally murdered by hired assassins, and that in the face of day. Still, there are Irish gentlemen of high ability and unblemished honour, and the inability to distinguish these from the professional order of Irish patriots has been among the weaknesses of recent Irish policy. If they could feel sure of not being thrown over by the next Cabinet and betrayed into the hands of rebels, men of this type might be induced to do good service in central, and even in local, government. For it is vain to contend against a further extension of self-government in Irish counties; not that Irishmen are really fit for the civil liberties which they already enjoy, but that in order to make them fit they must be released from leading strings, while they are restrained from acts of injustice by an effective power of veto. There is a process which relieves water of certain mineral elements by overcharging it with similar elements until it precipitates the whole of them. This process is applicable to Irish local government, and it is probable that a reconstruction of the grand jury system on a more popular basis,

with a right of supervision over smaller local bodies, would tend rather to purify the action of these bodies than to intensify the rowdyism and corruption which now disgrace them. Only it is absolutely essential, for the present, that a power of annulling iniquitous resolutions of local bodies, whether municipal corporations, town councils, boards of guardians, or grand juries, should be reserved by the Central Executive. Until Ireland has learned the alphabet of political justice—until a predatory or vindictive use of the rating power be as impossible there as in England—centralisation is a necessary evil.

But these gross abuses are largely, though by no means wholly, due to the unsettled state of the land question. Mr. Gladstone's well-meant but most unstatesmanlike reforms have not in the slightest degree advanced the settlement of this question; on the contrary, they have but whetted the appetites of tenants for their landlords' property, and artificially promoted the survival of the unfittest in the favoured class of 'present tenants.' Having gone so far, we must go a step further—buy out the landlords on equitable terms, place the State in the position which it occupies in India, and convert rent into a fixed terminable rent-charge or tribute. Of course, there are manifold objections to such a measure, and the benefit of it would be reaped by men who have done nothing to deserve it. We hear much of 'restitution,' but in fact very few Irish tenants represent the original owners, or have any titles whatever beyond those of English tenants, while in many cases the expropriation of landlords would mean the substitution of an owner descended from a Cromwellian trooper for an owner descended from a Cromwellian captain. Nor would the measure do much to transfer Irish soil from aliens to natives. The vast majority of Irish landlords, including all the worst, are already natives, and the few, though large, estates of absentee English noblemen, are for the most part liberally managed. Still, the general creation of a peasant proprietary in Ireland, if it could be accomplished, would cut the ground from under the present agrarian agitation, and

rally whatever manhood is still to be found in Irish farmers against the oppression of the National League. That body might continue to foment disloyalty and rebellion, as well as to instigate strikes against the payment of instalments due to the State, but they would find soldiers less easy to scare than bailiffs, and, as there would be no landlords, there would be no hostile class to vilify or to despoil. Probably, for a while, there would be as many agrarian murders and moonlight outrages as ever, for the struggle for land would go on though evictions should cease; but it would relapse into its primitive form of private and domestic blood-feuds, instead of being directed by an organised conspiracy. Whether 'present tenants,' even if transformed into landowners, will long be able to retain their ill-earned monopoly against the claim of town-artisans and agricultural labourers to a share of the national soil, is a very different question; but, at all events, their selfish instincts will be enlisted on the side of the law. A landed Democracy is as conservative by nature as a landed Aristocracy, and it would not be surprising if the new proprietors should form Vigilance Committees to protect themselves against landless assailants.

If the land question were once settled—if this eternal source of disaffection could be eradicated from the minds of the Irish peasantry—one main obstacle to a revival of Irish industry and trade would be removed. It is a common delusion to account for the scarcity of manufactures in Ireland by the absence of coal-fields. No doubt, there is little or no coal produced in Ireland; but it is easily imported, and is cheaper at Wexford or Waterford than it is in some manufacturing-towns of England. The reason why the south of Ireland is so destitute of manufactories is that a sense of insecurity has driven away capital from it, and that it is inhabited by a population singularly deficient in enterprise or steadiness. The natural and only remedy is the restoration of security, coupled with the development, by every legitimate means, of proprietorship and industry. No one scruples to invoke State aid for the development of pro-

prietorship, but it needs some courage to recommend the same method for the development of industry. Nevertheless, I venture to maintain that if one-tenth of what Ireland has lost through revolutionary experiments on its land-system had been wisely invested on public works, the prospects of Irish finance would be far brighter, and the national character would have been improved instead of being deteriorated. But though political economy was banished to Jupiter or Saturn in deference to agrarian intimidation, we have obstinately stickled for its supposed dogmas against every suggestion of State subventions for other purposes. It is time for us to reconsider this one-sided application of our economical creed to Ireland, and, moreover, to ask ourselves whether it is worth our while to maintain there a system of education theoretically unsectarian, though practically modified to meet sectarian prejudices. Let it be granted that, if Ireland were in an advanced state of civilisation, and if it were not torn asunder by furious religious animosities, such as have broken out into civil war at Belfast, it would be all the better for unsectarian education. Such was the benevolent idea of Whately and his coadjutors, but it has been tried and has failed. Ireland is still a very backward country, and messages of peace have not calmed religious passion. Why not recognise facts, give up the fiction of mixed education in elementary schools, and endow a Catholic University? It is too late to pay the priests, or to renew the dependence of Maynooth on an annual grant. But it is not too late to place the highest education within the reach of the Roman Catholic laity, on terms which they will accept; and, whether or not the boon should elicit gratitude, it would be a substantial benefit to Ireland.

For the present, then, our policy for Ireland should be founded on a vigorous assertion of Imperial authority, combined with an unprejudiced and sympathetic regard for Irish interests and feelings. This is a very different thing from the policy of 'delegation' proposed by Lord Monck as a happy medium between the schemes of Mr. Gladstone and



Mr. Parnell on the one side, and the supposed ideas of Lord Hartington and Mr. Chamberlain on the other. 'Delegation' of Imperial functions, however strictly limited, to a legislative body in Dublin, would practically mean, as Lord Monck admits, the creation of a 'statutory Parliament,' and a statutory Parliament, receiving its instructions from America, would never rest till it had issued a declaration of national independence. Delegation of similar functions to four provincial councils would be open to less objection, but it would also be less effectual for any good purpose, and, like the former plan, it would be damned beforehand as a miserable counterfeit of Home Rule. There is no prospect of peace for Ireland except in the maintenance of the Union in all its essential features; and the main difficulty of governing Ireland under the Union does not lie in Dublin, but at Westminster. The policy of Home Rule, as advocated by Mr. Gladstone and other recent converts, was essentially a policy of despair. They scarcely affected to believe in its merits or success, and preferred to rely on the hopelessness of inducing the English and Scotch people to support any Government in the measures necessary to keep order in Ireland without Home Rule. It is for the English and Scotch people, who have rejected Home Rule at the poll, to refute this argument in the only conclusive way, to rescue Ireland from the intrigues of politicians, and to give the Union a fairer chance than it has had since the good of Ireland has been forgotten in party competition for the Irish vote.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE C. BRODRICK.

Merton College, Oxford.

October 26, 1886.

THE 'CLASSES' AND THE 'MASSES'<sup>1</sup>

THE recent presentation of an address to Lord Hartington from Liberal Unionist graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, followed by the Spalding and Coventry elections, has naturally recalled public attention to Mr. Gladstone's favourite antithesis of 'the classes' and 'the masses.' That sinister appeal to the pride and prejudice of ignorance was perhaps his gravest lapse from patriotism and statesmanship, until he was tempted, in an evil moment, to reveal the real spirit of Home Rule policy by endeavouring to revive provincial antipathies among the Scotch and Welsh branches of the British nation. Still, the distinction between the political judgments of the so-called classes and the so-called masses is by no means unmeaning, and it may be profitable to consider its bearing on the question of Home Rule for Ireland.

No impartial student of political history, especially if he be a Liberal by conviction, will deny that on many great issues of modern politics the instincts of the poorer and less educated classes have, in the main, been right, while those of the wealthier and more educated classes have, in the main, been wrong. The reason is obvious. On these issues the apparent interests of the Few have been at variance with the apparent interests of the Many, and, inasmuch as Government exists for the benefit of the Many rather than of the Few, the cause which ultimately prevailed was not only the popular but the better cause. It was not by virtue of superior insight, still less by virtue of unselfish motives, that the people at large were enabled to appreciate the arguments for a cheap loaf,

<sup>1</sup> An Article in the *Liberal Unionist*, July 20, 1887.

for instance, but simply by virtue of their own self-interest, which it was the duty of the State to recognise as the *suprema lex*, thereby promoting the greatest happiness of the greatest number, instead of maintaining Corn Laws for the protection of landlords and farmers. This very simple principle explains the great majority of cases in which popular opinion has proved to be right, and the conservative instincts of 'society' have been confuted by the result. Nor must we forget that in those cases the general opinion of 'society' has not been always supported by a preponderance of what Mr. John Morley terms 'cultivated opinion.' On the contrary, the Corn Laws were denounced by leading economists of the highest culture long before their injurious effect was understood by the people, and it would be easy to cite instances, like that of the New Poor Law, in which reforms eminently beneficial to the working classes have been forced upon them by cultivated opinion. In short, ignorance of all that a statesman ought to know is no security for political wisdom, nor is the habit of reading books or newspapers, with occasional foreign travel, a disqualification for dealing with political affairs. Had the privileged classes not been privileged, and thus biassed, their judgments would have compared most favourably, on most questions of domestic policy, with those of the suffering and toiling masses, without leisure to master the necessary facts, often without the ability to read, and almost always without the will or the power to distinguish between specious rhetoric and the words of truth and soberness. As for most questions of foreign policy, it would be absurd to speak of popular verdicts upon them as possessing the slightest value. Had Mr. Gladstone headed an agitation in favour of State-right in America—no impossible supposition—he might well have persuaded vast bodies of electors that Secession was as sacred as Home Rule, and all the hallowed traditions of Liberalism would have been invoked on the side of those who rebelled against the Federal Government at Washington.

Unhappily, to the great majority of British electors Ire-

land is as much a foreign country as France, and more so than the United States of America. To consult the agricultural labourers of Spalding, as an oracle, on the expediency of dissolving the Union, or the conditions upon which Home Rule might be reconciled with Imperial control, is like consulting an infant-school on the highest problems of mathematics or theology. They may be richly endowed with honesty and intelligence, but they have not, and they cannot have, the very slightest capacity of examining either the historical fictions, miscalled facts, on which Mr. Gladstone mainly rests his case, or the present circumstances of Ireland, on which the most capable authorities differ so widely. They are, therefore, and they must be, at the mercy of the latest or the most plausible speaker; and the Home Rule emissaries, who swarmed over the constituency, take credit for having talked them over into a belief in the Nationalist version of the Irish story. Let us accept this boast as authentic, and let us further assume that agrarian discontent, with the advanced bid of six acres and two cows, was not the most potent cause of the Gladstonian victory in Lincolnshire. Let us then consider, by the light of Home Rule articles or pamphlets, what kind of history is likely to have been instilled into the minds of these docile electors, many of whom must have passed the school-age before the three R's became common accomplishments in country districts, and were probably ignorant of the fact that Ireland is an island adjacent to Great Britain.

They were told, we may be sure, that Ireland has been shamefully oppressed by England for seven centuries. Did they know—what Mr. Gladstone evidently does not know—that for some three centuries after the so-called Conquest of Ireland that country, outside the English Pale (consisting of four counties and two or three seaports), enjoyed the blessings of Home Rule; that, after the visit of John, no English king, except Richard II., set foot in Ireland for nearly five centuries; that no English army worthy of the name, except that of Richard II., crossed the Channel be-

tween the reign of Henry II. and that of Henry VIII.; that no laws were made for the great body of Irishmen by the English Parliament; and that, left to itself, Ireland relapsed into a state of savagery and anarchy disgraceful to Christianity? They were doubtless taught that the Irish nation was deliberately crushed by its English conquerors. Was there any one to inform them that no Irish nation ever existed within the period of historical memory; that Ireland, when it was invaded by Strongbow, was a mere 'geographical expression,' inhabited by a cluster of hostile tribes, under different chiefs, and owing allegiance to no single king; that it owes to England whatever unity or sense of nationality it has since acquired; and that it has borrowed from England every civil or political institution which it now enjoys, including some which it is not yet civilised enough to use without abuse? They were made to believe, on the infallible authority of Mr. Gladstone, that England at the Union feloniously robbed Ireland of its old native Parliament. Did they suspect that Ireland never had a native Parliament; that the assembly so grossly misdescribed was created by England for its own purposes, and represented only the English colony; that it was this very 'Irish Parliament' which passed the atrocious code of penal laws against the Catholics; and that even in its golden age, under Grattan, it never won the confidence of the Irish people? They knew that Mr. Gladstone had exhausted the vocabulary of vituperation on the means whereby the Union was carried. Were they aware that his charges have been combated and (as some think) disproved by Dr. Ingram and other historians of the period; that Grattan's Parliament had always been maintained and managed by the same questionable agencies as were employed to procure its self-extinction; that the Union was desired by a majority of the Irish Catholics, and that its chief opponents were the very classes who now protest against its Repeal? They were told that all the vices and miseries of Ireland are the natural products of English misrule. Could they divine that, on the contrary, these evils

were all rife and rampant long before English rule was established (except in four counties), and are most graphically described by Spenser nearly a century before the events to which they are traced back? They were, of course, plied with invectives against the horrors of Irish landlordism, and persuaded that Irish tenants, unlike the English, are defenceless at law against the exaction of extortionate rents. Might it not have surprised them to discover that, on the contrary, the Irish tenant, by the Act of 1870, was given a security for his improvements unknown to British tenants, as well as a right to compensation for disturbance; while by the Act of 1881 he acquired privileges almost amounting to joint ownership, and far beyond those enjoyed by tenants in any other country of Europe, or in any State of America? Their minds were harrowed by tales of eviction for non-payment of 'impossible rents.' Did they receive any intimation that Irish rents, already much lower on the average than rents in Great Britain, had been lately reduced by judicial courts; that large premiums are habitually paid by incoming tenants for the possession of farms alleged to be rack-rented; that land in Ireland is habitually sublet at a rent far above that demanded by the landlord; and that multitudes of tenants are not only able and willing to pay, but do clandestinely pay, rents which the National League declares to be impossible, and commands them to refuse on pain of Moonlight outrage? They were assured that public opinion throughout Ireland supports the National League. Had they knowledge enough of that unhappy country to realise that it is in the grip of a terrorist conspiracy, under which no such thing as public opinion can exist; that what passes for it is manufactured to order by the most infamous Press in Europe, by demagogues in the pay of American revolutionists, and by priests who affect sympathy with lawlessness and crime in the vain hope of retaining control over the people? They were led to imagine that Unionists upheld the Union solely for the sake of Imperial interests, and that, if Irish interests alone were concerned, it might be safely

and hopefully abandoned. Did they ask themselves whether, apart from all Imperial considerations, Ireland is fit to govern itself, and whether the concession of Home Rule would be a real benefit to it, or, rather, the greatest wrong that Great Britain could inflict upon it? They may have casually heard of 'The Case of England against Home Rule.' Were they cognisant of the reasons which, to many enlightened minds, render the *Case of Ireland against Home Rule* tenfold more cogent?

These are but specimens of the questions which must be faced and answered by any one, whether he be a member of the classes or the masses, who seeks to form an independent opinion on the policy of Home Rule. How many of the Spalding electors are likely to have entertained them, or to possess the most second-hand and superficial acquaintance with them? But then we are told by Mr. John Morley in plain, though courteous, language, that 'academic and literary opinion' is equally ignorant of Irish affairs, and we are advised 'to master three or four Irish Blue Books,' just as Mr. Gladstone is never tired of advising us to study Irish history during the past century. The advice is excellent, but it comes somewhat late; it scarcely goes far enough, and perhaps it is not more needed by educated Unionists than by educated Home Rulers. Few, indeed, have the profound knowledge of Irish history and Irish character which could alone entitle a statesman to grapple confidently with the present crisis in Ireland. But the Unionist Party contains a large proportion of historians, publicists, and thoughtful students of politics, who had mastered far more than three or four Irish Blue Books, and carried their researches into Irish history much further back than one century, before Mr. John Morley began the former course of study, or Mr. Gladstone the latter. The judgment of such men is doubtless fallible; nor must we ignore the 'cultivated opinion' on the side of Home Rule; but it certainly outweighs that of foreign theorists, whom Mr. Gladstone mistakes for 'the civilised world,' and it differs from

the tumultuous verdicts of the *vox populi* in the all-important respect that it is founded, not on impulse, but on a process of reasoning. Not that Messrs. Gladstone and John Morley have a right to claim the 'masses' as their adherents. When the great Liberal army broke up into two sections, they succeeded, it is true, in carrying most of the regimental colours and bands into their new camp. But most of the steadiest officers, both commissioned and non-commissioned, declined to follow them, and the result of the last general election shows that a very large number of the rank-and-file preferred the leadership of Lord Hartington. However this may be, the recent speeches of Mr. John Morley at Manchester, and of Mr. Bryce in Parliament, amount to an admission that Unionism is the prevailing creed, not only of the classes, but of highly-educated Englishmen. This is a very significant admission, and it was because they were known to represent a large majority of educated Englishmen that the University deputation to Lord Hartington assumed a national importance. The one argument for Irish Home Rule which comes home to English Democracy is the argument that, by conceding it, we should get rid of the Irish difficulty at a stroke, and set Parliament free to legislate for the good of the English masses. The utter hollowness of this argument is apparent only to 'cultivated opinion'—the opinion of men who, if they have not lived in Ireland, have at least taken pains to master the evidence on Irish questions. And perhaps the best service which such men can render to the Union cause, is to convince the masses that Home Rule would bring, not peace, but a sword—that it would not close the long account of Irish rebellion, but would open a new chapter of rebellious agitation, organised by the foreign enemies of Great Britain, and ending in armed Secession, only to be crushed by Civil War.



*PLAIN FACTS ABOUT IRELAND*<sup>1</sup>

It is often said, and still oftener tacitly assumed, that two years of constant discussion in Parliament and the Press have fairly exhausted the Irish Question, so that nothing remains but to criticise each fresh proposal by the light of facts within the knowledge of all. Probably no similar assumption was ever more unfounded. Not one in a thousand among those who talk, or even write, glibly about the merits of Home Rule, has taken the smallest pains to study the history and character of the Irish people, upon which our judgment of that policy ought mainly, if not solely, to depend. As for the less educated portion of the 'masses,' whose imaginary verdict is treated with profound respect, it may be doubted whether some of them have even yet fully realised that Ireland is an island adjacent to Great Britain, or whether the majority of them are aware that, in all essential respects, it is governed under the very same laws as England. Of course, the average intelligence of English or Scotch 'classes' is above this level, and those of them who read the newspapers cannot fail to have picked up some fragments of information about Ireland. Yet how few could pass the simplest examination in the alphabet of a subject on which their decision must affect the destiny of both countries in all future ages. Even in educated society it is common to hear statements made which betray utter ignorance, not only of early Irish history, but of recent Irish legislation. Nor is this ignorance confined to Home Rulers. In their eagerness to wash their hands of the past, and to concentrate their attacks

<sup>1</sup> *National Review*, 1886.

on Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill, Unionists are too apt to accept grossly exaggerated versions of the historical wrongs suffered by Ireland, and to practise that cheap but mischievous form of penance which consists in vilifying the policy of English statesmen in former generations, as if they were mainly responsible for Irish misery and discontent, and as if these evils could be eradicated by the simple expedient of turning over a new leaf. It may, therefore, be opportune and profitable to recall some 'Plain Facts about Ireland,' which may tend to correct such impressions, which admit of being easily verified, and which have a direct bearing on the issue now before Parliament.

The enumeration of these facts by no means implies or involves oblivion of other facts, equally well attested, which reflect discredit on English rule in Ireland, before it formed part of the United Kingdom. Whatever explanations or excuses may be offered for them, no one can justify such acts as the arbitrary Establishment of the Reformed Church in Ireland, the wholesale confiscations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Penal Laws against Catholics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, or the commercial restrictions, dating from the vice-royalty of Strafford, which crushed the staple branch of Irish industry for the benefit of English trade. It has been sought, indeed, to extenuate this last grievance by the allegation that it was only a part of a benevolent, though unsound, system under which the whole commerce of both realms was regulated at the discretion of the Legislature. No doubt, the famous Address from both Houses of the English Parliament to William III., as well as his reply, contemplated the direct encouragement of the Irish linen trade as a compensation for the destruction of the woollen trade. But though McCulloch credits the English Government with having carried out this promise by means of bounties on Irish linens, these were trifling compared with the prohibitory duties, and we must acknowledge, with shame, the selfish protectionist spirit in England which arrested the natural process whereby Ireland might have

gradually recovered from the devastation of war. If, however, we must be just in our self-condemnation, let us also be just in our appreciation of the plain facts about to be considered, which show that, after all, Irishmen are mainly to blame for their lamentable failure in civilisation, and that during the present reign, if not since the Union, the Imperial Government and the English people have done their utmost to conciliate Irish sentiment, despite the efforts of a rebellious conspiracy to render it permanently irreconcilable.

1. Let us, first, deal with the allegation so constantly made by Mr. Gladstone and his followers, that 'the Irish nation,' or 'Irish nationality,' has been constantly oppressed by England for seven centuries. At what period did this imaginary Irish nation exist? When Edward I. invaded Scotland, he made war upon a country with strong national traditions, which had long been practically united under one king of its own; and when Scotland accepted union with England, it had still an independent national Constitution, though its sovereign also wore the crown of England. When Henry II. was said to have conquered Ireland—which, in fact, he never did conquer—he found no king of Ireland, and no semblance of an Irish nation, but only a cluster of wild tribes, implacably hostile to each other, and living in a state of chronic anarchy compared to which the Saxon Heptarchy was a harmonious empire. No other nation had ever thought of recognising the national existence of Ireland; it had no flag, or army, or fleet of its own; no embassy from Ireland had ever reached a foreign Court, and, Catholic as it was, it was unknown at Rome, except as a barbarous province which might be handed over at will by the Pope to an English king. To compare the concession of national independence to Ireland with the modified revival of the Hungarian Constitution in 1867, is to confound a process of creation with a process of restoration. There is absolutely no historical basis for Irish nationality, and, if it were now established, it would be a perfectly new institution of purely English manufacture, as the consolidation of the Irish pro-

vinces and regions into one realm under a settled government has been exclusively the work of English monarchs and statesmen.

2. It is no less material to realise that for at least three centuries and a-half after the so-called Conquest—a period covering one half of Anglo-Irish history—the whole of Ireland, except a very few counties and seaports, was actually self-governed, its dependence on England being merely nominal. As Professor Goldwin Smith well says, 'England was conquered all at once, and the pang was over. In the case of Ireland, owing to the nature of the country, the unsettled habits of the people, and the distance from the centre of Anglo-Norman power, the process was cruelly protracted, and lingered on to the time of the Tudors, leaving intense bitterness behind it. This was disastrous, but we might as well concern ourselves practically at the present day about the untoward events of the Glacial Era.' Instead of Ireland being cruelly oppressed by England under the Plantagenet and Lancastrian kings, it was scarcely governed at all, and the whole island beyond the English 'Pale' enjoyed the blessings of Home Rule under its native rulers. After the visit of John, no English king set foot in Ireland for nearly five centuries. The only English armies, worthy of the name, that landed in Ireland between the reign of Henry II. and the accession of Henry VIII., were those brought over by Richard II.; and the formidable invasion of Edward Bruce was finally repulsed at Dundalk by the Anglo-Norman nobles and their retainers, without aid from England. The English Parliament never thought of legislating for Ireland; the so-called Irish Parliament legislated for the 'Pale,' or Anglo-Irish colony, alone; while the 'mere Irish' were equally beyond the reach of either. The barbarism into which Ireland inevitably sunk under this early experiment of Home Rule may be learned from the pathetic and graphic pages of Edmund Spenser. The vices, miseries, and abuses there depicted are precisely the same in kind with those which still constitute the difficulty of Irish government. But they

were far worse in degree, and his evidence furnishes the most conclusive answer to the prevalent delusion that Irish disorders are the product of English misrule.

3. It would be hardly too much to say that the exact contrary is the fact. It is true that England grievously failed in her mission of civilising Ireland. It is true also that, after political and agrarian enmities were aggravated by religious antagonism, the people—and especially the Catholics—of Ireland were oppressed, not by the English people, who had then little voice in State affairs, but by the English Government. But it is no less true that every civil and political liberty which Ireland enjoys it owes to England, and to England alone. Neither trial by jury, nor Parliamentary representation, nor the freedom of the Press, nor the Poor Law, nor popular education, nor any other privilege of citizenship now common to Irishmen with Englishmen, is an institution of Irish origin. They were all imported from England, and there is not one of them which is not grossly abused, at this very moment, by Irishmen who seem to consider an incapacity for the honest exercise of civil rights a title and qualification for the duties of national self-government.

4. Were it not for the persistent assertions of Mr. Gladstone, it would be needless to point out, what Lord Brabourne has so well illustrated, the fallacy of describing the old Irish Parliament as either indigenous or independent. Not only was it not indigenous, but it was essentially exotic and artificial in its inception, a mere convention of English settlers within the Pale, summoned at irregular intervals, and justly denounced as a 'colonial' assembly by patriots of Irish race. For two or three generations after the Reformation, Catholics were admitted to it; and after the reign of James I. it purported, in the roughest sense, to represent all Ireland; but from the year 1692 downwards Catholics were excluded from it, in the year 1727 they were deprived of the franchise, which they only recovered in 1793, and at no period since the Reformation was it even tolerably representative of

the Irish people. Not only was it not independent, but its dependence was statutely declared in the famous Poyning's Act, passed at Drogheda in 1494, whereby the Parliament of Ireland was disabled from considering any Bill which had not been first approved by the Lord Deputy in Council, and sanctioned by the King. Moreover, the English Legislature was then empowered to make laws binding on Ireland, and this power was more emphatically reasserted by a statute of 1719. For eighteen years, indeed—from 1782 to 1800—the Irish Parliament, still exclusively composed of Protestants, and mainly composed of placemen and nominees, enjoyed a meteoric career of legislative independence. It produced some great orators, it is true, and passed more than one remedial measure, together with a series of Draconian 'Coercion Acts,' but it committed as many blunders as could well have been crowded into a similar period. As a patriotic Irish historian remarks, 'The independent Parliament was but the tool of an English statesman; not one quarter of its members were chosen by the people . . . reform was hopeless, and independence but a name.'

5. If it is an error to speak of the Irish Parliament as either a native or a free Legislature, still more flagrant is the error of regarding its abolition as a stroke of sinister or despotic policy, designed to quench the (mythical) nationality of Ireland. Without entangling ourselves with the wearisome controversy over the Act of Union, we may clearly distinguish several leading and decisive facts. If anything be certain, it is that Pitt and Cornwallis were actuated by the desire, not to bring Ireland into subjection, but to ensure it against French invasion and to protect the Roman Catholics against the bigotry of Protestant Ascendancy. In these objects they succeeded, and though we may blame Pitt for not combating the opposition of George III. at all hazards, he assuredly intended the Union as a step to Catholic Emancipation and to a full participation of Ireland in the prosperity of Great Britain. This was clearly understood by intelligent Irish Catholics, and the opposition to the Union mainly proceeded,

not from these, but from the very professional classes, mostly Protestants, who are now the stoutest opponents of Repeal. No one denies that public money, as well as patronage, was largely and unscrupulously employed to carry the Union; but it has been conclusively shown, by Dr. Ingram and others, that by far the greater part of this expenditure was applied in compensation for the loss of valuable interests and expectations, not in buying over honest opponents. What is still more important, and still more apt to be overlooked, is that the Irish Parliament had been kept alive by systematic jobbery and corruption, nor were the means by which it was dissolved in any respect more dishonourable than the means by which it was sustained and managed. Had the Union been as unpopular as it is now represented to have been, it is utterly incredible that it should have been followed by a generation of almost unbroken peace; for Emmett's abortive attempt at rebellion was suppressed in a few hours, and the political tranquillity of Ireland was not seriously disturbed until the Catholic Association was formed by O'Connell, and its strength was revealed by the famous Clare election.

6. When it is said that the Union has proved a failure, it is assumed that a native Parliament would have been more successful in healing the wounds and developing the resources of Ireland. This assumption, being purely speculative, is beyond the sphere of our discussion, but it may be well to review briefly some 'plain facts' which go far to redeem from reproach the legislative history of Ireland under the Union. And, first, let it be remembered that Catholic Emancipation, refused by the Irish Parliament, was actually carried, though after too long a delay, by the Imperial Legislature. It was followed by a rapid succession of remedial measures, which fill a large space in our statute-book. By the National system of Education, since greatly modified to suit Irish prejudices, the ultimate source of power, both moral and political, was brought within the reach of people. By the Church Temporalities Act and Tithe Commutation Act, the worst grievances arising from the Church Establishment were

abated, until the Church itself was disestablished and dis-endowed in 1869. By the Poor Law, carried in spite of O'Connell, and afterwards amended so as to make half the rates payable by landlords, an universal right to indoor relief was instituted, which saved the lives of myriads during the Great Famine; while by the Evicted Tenantry Act of 1848 temporary provision was made for homeless paupers, without bringing them into the workhouse. By the Municipal Reform Act, the democratic principle was introduced into the local government of Irish towns. By various Acts, some twenty millions sterling was advanced for public works in Ireland out of the Imperial Exchequer, and nearly one-third of this sum was remitted. By the Encumbered Estates Act, millions of acres were rescued from the hands of embarrassed and broken-down proprietors, to be placed in those of purchasers, mostly Irishmen, who, it was hoped, might become resident and improving landlords—a hope too seldom fulfilled. These and other enactments for the good of Ireland were supplemented by a long series of solid administrative reforms, and paved the way for the agrarian legislation of the last eighteen years, hereafter to be noticed. Their joint effect may be measured by the undoubted fact that Ireland in 1870 supported a population somewhat larger than it contained at the Union, in far greater comfort, and in a far higher state of civilisation. The Irish labourer of 1870 was far better fed, housed, and clothed than his grandfather, and this improvement in his lot was not purchased at the expense of other classes. The farmers, in particular, held deposits in the banks which seventy years before would have seemed fabulous, and paid wages twice as high with much less effort, in spite of increased rents. The landlords were not only wealthier, but spent a greater portion of their wealth in Ireland, the causes of absenteeism having been diminished under the Union, though Dublin had ceased to be the seat of Government. If manufacturing enterprise had not been developed proportionably, it had certainly not been the fault of Imperial legislation, nor can it be adequately explained by



such physical drawbacks as the dearth of coal, for the eastern coasts of Ireland are at no disadvantage, in this respect, as compared with many thriving parts of England. For a century Irish manufactures have competed on equal terms with those of England or Scotland, and, if they have been less successful, the cause must be mainly sought in that want of energy and steady industry which had been observed from the earliest times as the great obstacle to improvement in Ireland.

7. It is the commonest of errors to speak of Ireland as still governed by England. Such was actually the fact during the first eighty years of the last century, nor did it absolutely cease to be the fact when the Irish Parliament obtained a nominal independence. For it is an equally serious, though equally common, error to imagine that Ireland was then united to Great Britain only by 'the golden link of the Crown.' On the contrary, the Executive Government of Ireland was practically responsible, not to the Parliament in Dublin, but to the Parliament at Westminster, and the Great Seal was affixed to Irish Bills on the advice of the British Ministry. With the Union, however, this provincial dependence of Ireland on Great Britain came utterly to an end. Thenceforward, Ireland has no more been governed by England than is Scotland, or Lancashire, or London—which now contains a population nearly as great as that of Ireland in respect of numbers, while in respect of intelligence, wealth, and every other qualification for citizenship, its superiority is so transcendent as to defy comparison. Ireland, Scotland, and England itself, are now equally governed by an united Parliament, in which Ireland has rather more than its fair share of representation, with the full right, which its representatives exercise most unscrupulously, of pressing its special claims on the attention of its partners. As for the Vice-Royalty, which has sometimes been paraded as an Irish grievance, it has really been retained chiefly in deference to Irish sentiment, and when the House of Commons passed a vote for its abolition by an overwhelming majority, the

strongest protests against any such measure were received from the citizens of Dublin. Its abolition was then advocated by Liberals of the old school, as part and parcel of the policy of assimilation whereby the Irish Channel was gradually to be bridged over, and all badges of difference obliterated. That policy has now been abandoned for the counter-policy of special legislation for Ireland, and the abolition of the Vice-Royalty would now destroy, not a standing monument of British despotism, but a valuable instrument for mediation between Irish and English opinion. Torrents of abuse have been poured upon 'the Castle' by Irish demagogues, and the English 'masses' have been taught to believe that in its secret chambers the Lord Lieutenant, the Chief Secretary, and a Machiavellian Privy Council, are constantly engaged in framing plots and forging chains for the enslavement of the Irish people. The broad facts are that the Chief Secretary, who is really the Lord Lieutenant's Prime Minister, is as responsible to Parliament as the Home Secretary, and is there exposed to far more searching criticism; that he possesses no power whatever over the administration of justice; and that 'the Castle' really consists of a few officials, mostly both honest and able, far more accessible to Irish influences than Under-Secretaries or clerks at the Home Office, and traditionally disposed to modify Imperial instructions so as to conciliate Irish prejudices. The besetting sin of 'the Castle' is not its tyranny, but its weakness; its action is strictly limited by Common and Statute law; and the prevailing impression that it is somehow in league with the Judiciary chiefly arises from the untoward accident that the Irish Lord Chancellor and law officers have their official chambers in the same building with the heads of civil departments. Instead of its being the fact that Ireland is administered through Englishmen, the fact is that a much larger proportion of Irishmen is to be found in the English Civil Service than of Englishmen in the Irish Civil Service. Every judge on the Irish Bench is of Irish birth; the official staff of every Irish Board consists almost entirely of Irish-

men; and, if the Under-Secretary has sometimes of late been an Englishman or a Scotchman, it is not unworthy of remembrance that the last Under-Secretary of Irish blood—a Roman Catholic of the old stock—was murdered in broad daylight by hired Irish assassins in the Phoenix Park.

8. Another prevalent delusion is the notion that Ireland is almost destitute of local self-government. The fact is that, with one important exception, it possesses a system of local self-government essentially the same as that which exists in England, but has shown a rare incapacity of working it honestly or efficiently. In Ireland, as in England, there are three principal areas of local government—the County, the Union, and the Municipality. Of these, by far the most important in Ireland is the Union, in which the local authority is the Board of Guardians, partly consisting of magistrates, sitting *ex-officio*, partly of elective members. Now, the scandals of Union administration in Ireland are notorious, wherever, as is too often the case, the Irish gentry constituting the non-elective element have been overborne or reduced to a hopeless minority. It is not only that many Boards of Guardians act shamelessly as committees of the National League, making a predatory use of their rating powers, prostituting their patronage to subsidise Nationalist agents, and getting rid of chairmen who object to abuse their functions by putting disloyal resolutions: it is also that jobbery and waste are carried to extremes unknown in English Unions. This was abundantly shown by the Poor Relief (Ireland) Enquiry Commission of last year, which investigated the expenditure of grants under the Poor Relief (Ireland) Act of 1886, and disclosed an almost incredibly shameful malversation of public funds. The same holds good, to an almost equal degree, of Irish Town Councils, which are the chief local authority in corporate towns, and consist entirely of elective members, mostly of Nationalist opinions. The one local authority in Ireland which is generally admitted to do its duty honourably and efficiently is that which is least defensible in theory and least representative—the Grand

Jury, which has a very large control over county finance, and is mainly nominated by the High Sheriff. It does not follow that, because the experiment of local self-government has thus broken down in most parts of Ireland, it is doomed to perpetual failure under conditions yet to be devised. But it is material to grasp the fact that local self-government is already widely developed in Ireland, but that hitherto the Irish have shown themselves signally deficient in those simple political virtues upon which free institutions entirely depend for their success.

9. Still more delusive is the oft-repeated fallacy that 'public opinion' in Ireland has declared in favour of Home Rule. What is true is, that a large majority of Irish votes have been cast in favour of Home Rule, as they would have been cast in favour of total Separation, or, indeed, of the Union, under the dictation of the same Terrorist conspiracy which has well-nigh stamped out the very idea of 'public opinion' in three provinces of Ireland. An Irish *plébiscite* under the rule of the National League is worth neither more nor less than a *plébiscite* of Paris under the rule of Robespierre and the Jacobins, whose fall was greeted with tumultuous acclamations by the same fickle populace. What passes for 'public opinion' in Ireland is mostly fabricated to order by a Nationalist Press which has no rival for scurrility and mendacity in Europe or America, but which circulates, to the exclusion of all honest newspapers, among the great mass of Irish peasants. Assuming, however, that Irish public opinion is genuine, and is to be measured by Nationalist utterances for the last twenty years, it has declared, not in favour of Home Rule, in any constitutional sense, but of complete national independence. The continuity of the Irish revolutionary movement has been established by the clearest evidence, and the 'Irish Felon' of 1848 is shown to have been the lineal ancestor of 'United Ireland' in 1888. When Home Rule was originally invented, and most ably formulated by Mr. Butt under the name of 'Federalism,' it utterly failed to evoke any popular enthusiasm, and was abandoned for

the Fenian ideal—the ideal of an Irish Republic, wire-pulled from America, and existing by virtue of an undying hostility to Great Britain. Mr. Butt's moderation was as fatal to his control over the Home Rule movement as O'Connell's refusal to defy the law had been fatal to his control over the Young Ireland movement. Mr. Parnell, clearly perceiving this, associated his scheme of Home Rule with that which Mr. Gladstone described as the gospel of public plunder, and, while he dropped the avowal of his ulterior aims so far as was necessary to satisfy his English allies, he encouraged his Irish associates to proclaim them on the housetops in America, and, on proper occasions, in Ireland. It is historically certain that Fenianism was nothing but a revival of the Young Ireland rebellion in an American garb, while both the Land League and the present Home Rule conspiracy were evolved out of Fenian elements; and the one grain of solid matter in the so-called 'public opinion' of Ireland is a belief in the final triumph of the Irish Revolution—that is, in the erection of an Irish-American Republic.

10. The alleged failure of 'coercion' in Ireland is a favourite argument with Irish Nationalists, but a reference to plain facts tends rather to show the constant failure of conciliation. The concession of Catholic Emancipation was closely followed by the commencement of O'Connell's Repeal campaign, and by an accession of agrarian outrages more atrocious than any recorded in recent Irish history. The chief motive of these outrages was supposed to have been removed by the Irish Tithe Commutation Act, accompanied by the Poor Law, and followed two years later by the Municipal Act. The immediate sequel was the renewal of the Repeal agitation, culminating in the Young Ireland insurrection. The prompt suppression of that insurrection, and not any fresh act of conciliation, secured tolerable peace in Ireland for some fifteen years, after which Fenianism was openly propagated by Irish-American filibusters, until it was vigorously put down. The Irish Church Act was passed in 1869 as a 'healing measure,' and in that year the country became

so unsettled that it was necessary to reinforce the troops in Ireland, and to pass the temporary Peace Preservation Act of 1870, in proposing which Mr. Fortescue declared that agrarian crime had been more rife in Ireland during the preceding fourteen months than at any time since the year 1852. To extirpate the alleged cause of this crime, the sweeping Land Act of 1870 was passed; but so little did it fulfil its conciliatory purpose that in the very next year Parliament not only found it necessary to renew the Peace Preservation Act for two years, but passed the far more stringent 'Westmeath Act,' whereby the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended in that county and certain adjoining districts for the same period of two years. Remedial legislation, however, was continued. Mr. Gladstone came into power in 1880 resolved to govern Ireland under the ordinary law, and in 1881 the most revolutionary, but not the last, of Irish Land Acts was passed. The prompt reply to it was the No Rent Manifesto, the Phoenix Park murders, and (two or three years later) the Plan of Campaign.

11. Though it is a radical misconception to imagine that Irish disaffection springs directly from agrarian causes, or could be cured by merely agrarian remedies, it is true that agrarian discontent and agrarian cupidity are the most powerful motives to which the Home Rule conspiracy appeals. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to understand the main facts of Irish agrarian history, and the more so because no aspect of the Irish Question has been so grossly obscured by ignorance and falsehood. It is too often taken for granted, as if it were a self-evident proposition, that all the agrarian troubles of Ireland are due to landlordism—and especially to absentee landlordism. The fact is, that Ireland contains vast tracts where neither the soil nor the climate is suited for any form of agriculture, where even a thrifty and industrious population could scarcely exist by tillage, but where from time immemorial the population has been neither thrifty nor industrious, and was even more restless and turbulent under its old tribal chiefs than it is under its modern landlords. It

is from these very districts—where rents are lowest, and are now seldom paid—that a large proportion of outrages are reported, and the inordinate space occupied by these districts in the English mind is one fertile source of erroneous impressions. No doubt, absenteeism is an evil, or, rather, it would be an evil, if the alternative were a race of resident landlords animated by the public spirit and generous traditions of English gentlemen. But, again, the fact is that an enormous majority of Irish landlords are both native and resident, that the estates of absentee English noblemen are mostly conspicuous for their liberal management, and that Irish purchasers under the Encumbered Estates Court notoriously figure among the worst landlords in Ireland. Here, if anywhere, oppressive rack-renting is to be found; but the notion that Ireland generally is rack-rented, as compared with Great Britain, is perhaps the most demonstrably false among the many fallacies now current in regard to it. Long before the recent concession of legal tenant-right, it was conclusively refuted by the enormous deposits of Irish farmers in the banks, by the large portions usually forthcoming on the marriage of even the humbler farmers' daughters, by the handsome compensations constantly awarded to Irish tenants, as distinct from their landlords, in respect of their interests, under Bills for railways or other public improvements, but, above all, by the extravagant sums habitually given for the good-will of tenancies. Not even an Irishman will deliberately pay a fancy price for the privilege of being cruelly rack-rented; yet successive Commissions found that, not only in Ulster, but in other provinces, the practice of buying farms from outgoing tenants was far commoner than had been supposed. Returns lately obtained from official and private sources clearly show that such purchasers were willing, on the average, to give some ten years' purchase on the old rents for the tenant-right, and, exorbitant as this may seem, they often succeeded in sub-letting at a rent which justified this outlay. Indeed, we have the express testimony of the Bessborough Commission, fully adopted by Mr. Gladstone,

that in Ireland 'it was unusual for landlords to exact what in England would have been considered a full or fair commercial rent.' The reason, of course, was that most, though by no means all, 'improvements' were executed in Ireland by the tenant, who thus acquired a valuable interest in the property by custom long before it was secured to him by law.

12. It would be interesting to know how many of those who declaim on the wrongs of Irish tenants have ever studied either the Irish Land Act of 1870 or that of 1881. At all events, a brief summary of their provisions, as affecting Irish tenancies, is assuredly not superfluous. The first of these Acts was founded, in its conception, on a sound basis. Its framers recognised the fact that a typical Irish tenant-farmer was not the creature of contract at all, but the survival of an ancient and genuine, though disinherited, peasantry. Their object, therefore, was to give him a legal security of tenure, and compensation for improvements, which thenceforth were presumed in law to have been made by him or his predecessors. On the other hand, they recognised the absurdity and the injustice of extending the Ulster Custom, on the faith of which existing tenants had paid large sums of money, to cases in which existing tenants had taken farms without paying a penny. They deliberately rejected both perpetuity and fixity of tenure, for Mr. Gladstone elaborately pointed out that, by conceding either, the landlord would have been converted into a mere pensioner or owner of a ground-rent, without the duties or obligations of proprietorship, and that a social revolution would be the inevitable result. At the same time, the Act gave tenants what must be called a beneficial right of occupation, by imposing on the landlord a penalty for 'disturbance,' varying inversely with the value of the holding, in addition to all tenants' claims for improvements. These were now legalised for the first time in the history of English law, and several years before English tenants were admitted to like privileges. The right to compensation for improvements was made indefeasible as to all



holdings below 50*l.* a year, including an immense majority of Irish tenancies, and held good whether the tenant was turned out or quitted the farm of his own accord. It held good even if he was ejected for non-payment of rent or for the breach of a condition against sub-letting. Not only so, but, although non-payment of rent, and certain breaches of covenant, were made a conclusive bar to claims for 'disturbance,' a significant exception was introduced in favour of tenancies valued at 15*l.* or under (probably three-fourths of the whole), in case the Court should deem the rent 'exorbitant.' In other words, the pregnant idea of fixing rents by a Government valuation was imported into the Irish Land Act of 1870. Nor was this all. Under the Equities Clause, the Court was invested with the largest possible discretion to review the 'conduct' of both parties, and was specially empowered to give compensation, even where no claim was made for improvements or disturbance, if the tenant or his predecessors in title had given money or money's worth for the farm with the landlord's consent.

13. Such was the Act afterwards described, especially by those who had never looked into it, as lamentably deficient in liberality towards Irish tenants. It might be alleged, with far greater reason, that it placed the Irish tenant in a position inconsistent with the fundamental idea of tenancy—a position far more favourable than that enjoyed by the British tenant, by tenants holding under the Code Napoléon on the Continent of Europe, or by tenants in the United States of America. All may now see, what some discerned in 1870, that it contained in itself the seeds of inevitable miscarriage. Instead of simply awarding a full retrospective compensation for past claims of tenant-right, and making a new departure for the future on the footing of contract, it perpetuated the loose and indefinite system of tenure by custom, and no gift of prophecy was needed to foresee that it would be followed by communistic demands for a more wholesale transfer of proprietary rights from Irish landlords to Irish tenants. Moreover, while it utterly destroyed all sentiments of family allegiance among

Irish tenants, it absolved Irish landlords from all claims upon their sympathy and generosity. A few bad seasons increased the difficulty of collecting rents; it was discovered that Irish tenants had not only a legal right to compensation for improvements and disturbances on eviction, but a moral right to fixity of tenure at a 'fair rent,' with perfect freedom of sale; a new agitation for the 'Three F's,' as they were called, was set on foot, and promoted by murderous outrage; the Government yielded, and the famous agrarian charter of the Three F's was embodied in the Irish Land Act of 1881.

14. The cumbrous and complicated provisions of this Act defy abridgment, but its general effect may be stated in a few words. It established a perpetual duality of tenure between landlord and tenant, by giving tenants a statutory and saleable lease of fifteen years, renewable every fifteen years until the end of time, at a rent to be fixed judicially. It was a favourite saying amongst its admirers, mostly ignorant of its contents, that it did no more than had been done long ago by the legislation of Stein and Hardenberg in Prussia. Almost the exact reverse was the fact. The legislation of Stein and Hardenberg extinguished double ownership by partitioning the heavily-burdened lands of tenants between them and their landlords, each of whom thenceforth owned his share in fee. The Irish Land Act, on the contrary, extinguished single ownership. It retained the fiction of tenancy with all its irritating incidents, stereotyping the possession of existing tenants, regulating their rent through Courts, and enabling them to pocket the difference between the judicial rent and the marketable rent-value of their holdings by selling them to strangers. Nor does the tenant forfeit his right of free sale by a breach of covenant, or any act that might justify eviction. The one-sided policy of this statute is conspicuous throughout. For instance, no tenant can have his rent increased by reason of any improvements made by himself or his predecessors (unless he shall have already received their value), but he may, and often does, have his rent lowered by reason of deterioration in the farm due to his

own neglect or wastefulness. So, again, the statutory lease of fifteen years operates exclusively in favour of the tenant, and not of the landlord; for, while other lessees are bound to carry out all their agreements during the currency of the lease, the Irish holder of a statutory term can surrender it, though he cannot be evicted. Meanwhile, tenants may improve their holdings for their own benefit, without the landlord's consent, with a legislative guarantee against the rent being raised on that account, but no landlord can obtain an increase of rent upon capital laid out by himself in improvement, except by special agreement with his tenant. In a word, the whole Act is framed in a protective spirit, alien to that of equal justice, for the purpose of enriching existing tenants at the expense, not only of their landlords, but of all future tenants. Since it passed, every farm which changes hands in Ireland must practically be rack-rented. The lower the rent, the higher the price of the tenant-right; and no 'future tenant,' squeezed between these upper and nether millstones, can possibly hope to farm at a profit. Of course, this avowed concession to criminal agitation directly stimulated the renewal of such agitation, and though judicial rents fixed under the Act were far below the market value of farms, a rapid fall in agricultural prices revealed the fundamental unsoundness of its principle, and favoured a passionate demand for a fresh intervention of the State. To enforce this demand, or, rather, to anticipate State action by a system of criminal intimidation, the Plan of Campaign was devised, and was soon followed by the Land Act of 1887. Under this Act nearly 150,000 leaseholders, whom Mr. Gladstone had declined to place on the same footing as yearly tenants, obtained the privilege of having their rents judicially regulated—a privilege from which the landlord was deliberately excluded. At the same time, it empowered the Courts to lower rents already fixed, in accordance with the fall in prices, and to stay evictions where the defaulting tenant is the victim of misfortune, and not of his own fault. Nor is this all. Under Lord Ashbourne's Act, passed in 1885, Irish tenants

had already been enabled to purchase their farms by agreement with their landlords, borrowing the whole purchase-money from the State, and paying thenceforth a lower rent than before (covering both principal and interest), with the prospect of absolute ownership at the end of forty-nine years. It is needless to say that no more effect was produced by these Acts than by their predecessors in relieving Ireland from its ancient curse of agrarian conspiracy. The security promised to Irish landlords as an equivalent for the spoliation has proved worse than delusive, and each sacrifice of their rights has but whetted the appetite of those who openly deny their claim to anything above the 'prairie value' of their land.

15. It is now time for us to recapitulate briefly the 'Plain Facts about Ireland' which have come under our review—facts which lie on the very threshold of the Irish Question, but which are apparently unknown to, or ignored by, too many of those who profess to expound it. We have seen, in the first place, that Irish nationality is a past that was never present; that whatever sense of national unity Ireland now possesses, and all its free institutions, it owes to English rule; that it never had a national Parliament worthy of the name till it was admitted to partnership in the Imperial Parliament; that its wise surrender of a nominal legislative independence was not the nefarious intrigue conjured up by Mr. Gladstone, and was justified by the results; that Ireland has made great progress in everything but loyalty under the Union, and is now as truly self-governed as any part of Great Britain; that the Vice-royalty and the 'Castle system' are no monuments or instruments of oppression, but rather intermediate links between the Central Executive and the Irish people; that Ireland actually enjoys and constantly abuses local franchises and institutions nearly the same as those of Great Britain; that 'public opinion,' in the English sense, does not exist in Ireland; and that, if intermittent 'coercion' has failed, the failure of conciliation has been still more signal and significant. We have, then, rapidly surveyed the essential con-

ditions of agrarian disorder in Ireland, and the chief measures whereby it has been sought to remedy it, at the sacrifice of every principle except that of expediency. We have seen that no Irish tenant can now be rack-rented by his landlord, though he may be ground down by the payment of an extortionate tenant-right to his predecessor; that his judicial rent may be lowered by a Court as prices go down, but cannot be raised as prices go up; that, however much his rent may be in arrear, he can obtain full compensation for improvements on quitting his farm, or sell it to the highest bidder; and that, if he wishes to buy it out-and-out from his landlord, he is enabled to do so by the use of public credit, on such terms that his yearly charge will be less than his old rent; in short, that he enjoys the protection of a one-sided agrarian code framed expressly for his benefit, and securing to him privileges unknown to his fellows in the rest of the United Kingdom, on the Continent of Europe, in the Colonies, or in the United States of America.

16. These facts constitute but a part, though a most important part, of the lesson to be studied by all who aspire to form a comprehensive and trustworthy judgment on the Irish Question, as a whole. To complete that lesson, as we have seen, they must be grouped together with facts of a different order, but they must also be reinforced by other facts of the same order, strongly confirming the inference to be drawn from them. In the meantime, they are amply sufficient to demolish the whole fabric of fiction by which a Separatist policy is commonly supported, and to justify the belief that, if Ireland is ever to be regenerated, it must be regenerated, not through Secession and isolation, but through organic 'union with that sister-nation to which Providence has linked her by an immutable decree.'



V

HISTORICAL SUBJECTS





## THE AGE OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

A Review of Grote's 'History of Greece,' vol. xii, (May 1856)

MR. GROTE has been unable to redeem the promise made in the preface to his eleventh volume. Plato and Aristotle are reserved for a separate treatise, 'devoted especially to an account of Greek speculative philosophy in the fourth century B.C.' The twelfth volume is, therefore, the last of this great work; nor are we disposed to complain that the events from the death of Philip to 'the close of the generation contemporary with Alexander' have not been compressed into a smaller compass.

The historian has exercised a wise discretion in allowing the curtain to fall at this epoch. Even at the commencement of Alexander's reign, 'the Hellenic world has ceased to be autonomous'; after a few years of conquest, 'instead of Hellenizing Asia, he was tending to Asiatize Macedonia and Hellas'; after the battle of Issus, it may truly be said that 'Greece, as a separate subject of history, no longer exists.' The Government and forces of the 'Diadochi' were hardly more Hellenic than the army of General Williams was English, unless military organisation and official language be the essence of nationality. Nor did the Achæan League satisfy 'the ancient Grecian sentiment of an autonomous Hellenic world as the indispensable condition of a dignified and desirable existence.' It does but bridge over the chasm between two periods of degradation—the period when Athens trembled before the generals of Alexander, and the period when we no longer hear of Greeks north and south of Thermopylæ, but of 'Macedonia' and 'Achaia.' Demosthenes did not add Arbela to the list of Pan-Hellenic victories in his memorable oath,

nor is the portrait of Aratus placed on a level with the ancient worthies of Greece in the historical gallery of Plutarch.

We are not surprised to find that Mr. Grote, whose leanings, when he does not 'Atticize,' are decidedly Pan-Hellenic, should describe with little relish the course of 'that non-Hellenic conqueror into whose vast possessions the Greeks are absorbed, with their intellectual brightness dimmed, their spirit broken, and half their virtues taken away by Zeus.' Not that any of Mr. Grote's great merits are absent from this volume; his amazing familiarity with Greek politics finds ample scope in the party contests, not now between the many and the few, but between Philo-Macedonians and Anti-Macedonians, in every independent town of Greece; his sound judgment unravels the intricacies of Alexander's campaigns and estimates the results of his conquests; his patient research digests *Arrian*, *Diodorus*, and *Curtius*, as it formerly digested *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, and *Demosthenes*. But it is useless to conceal that it is no longer a labour of love. Mr. Grote travels over the last days of Greece like Xerxes's soldiers 'under the lash'; he writes with the air of a man who has a sad duty to perform. Yet there is a certain rueful satisfaction (such as Bias might have felt after the reduction of Ionia) in his description of the evils which befel those little States which would not follow the course which he, who loved them better than one of their own citizens, prescribed. The mildness and incorruptibility of Phokion fare no better than the respectability and religion of Nikias, for 'in Phokion's patriotism' 'no account was taken of Athenian independence—of the autonomy or self-management of the Hellenic world.' And so Grecian liberty perished. He stands over the wasted frame declaring that, if his advice had been followed, it would never have happened. But he has not the heart to attend the obsequies, and we sympathise with his feeling.

But while we do not yield to Mr. Grote in admiration of the Greek republics in general, and Athens in particular, as the birthplaces of a noble type of character, and the conservators of a freedom, disorderly indeed, but sublime in its idea,

which they illustrated with an unrivalled literature, we cannot but see their incapacity to exercise *direct* influence on the destinies of mankind. Perfect as working-models (so to speak) of city government, they were fitted, like some individuals, to instruct rather than to lead the human race. Great instruments must be employed to effect great ends, and, to say nothing of the enormous evils which attend such constitutions, cities cannot beneficially administer imperial functions, except in that kind of combination which Greece repeatedly and signally failed to realise. It is this fact—the intrinsic smallness of Athens, Sparta and Thebes—of Greek States, in short, which, by Plato's confession, would cease to be States if they should contain above 100,000 citizens—that must qualify our grief at their successive subjugation by the power of Macedonia and Rome, and explain the contempt of Alexander when he characterised the campaign of Agis as a battle of frogs and mice. Mr. Grote's sole idea of Alexander's influence on Greece is 'compression'—'free development' being the life of republican institutions; but we can imagine a point of view in which 'expansion' would seem the more appropriate term for the change wrought by Alexander on the narrowness of Hellenic policy.

A similar bias leads Mr. Grote to attribute to peculiar circumstances, and to the perversities of individuals or particular States, what was, in fact, the operation of a general law—the ascendancy of Macedonia under Philip and Alexander. It was not merely that 'Greek citizens were not like trained Macedonian soldiers' (just as the feudal contingents could not stand against paid standing-armies), nor that Alexander and his father had engrossed to themselves the inexhaustible energy once the characteristic of the Athenians; the sufficient cause was that of which modern Europe supplies illustrations to superfluity—the want of cohesion in the Hellenic body, rendering it unable to resist either the arms or the bribes of its stronger neighbour. Like the Scotch clans of a century and a-half since, described by Mr. Macaulay, these self-governed townships could not be united except

under the command of a foreigner; even common hatred proved too feeble a bond.

One year made Alexander absolute master of Greece. The prevailing feeling at his accession is registered in Mr. Grote's pithy table of contents as 'Discontent in Greece, but no Positive Movement.' The autumn of the year B.C. 336 witnessed the Convention of Corinth, which 'recognized Hellas as a confederacy under the Macedonian Prince as imperator, president, or executive head and arm.' During the winter, the spirit of the treaty was constantly infringed by the intervention of Macedonian officers in the affairs of the contracting States, and certain aggressions at sea, which led to communications between Athens, at least, and Persia. It is rather humiliating to hear that, 'even down to the eve of the battle of Issus, Demosthenes and others were encouraged by their correspondents in Asia to anticipate success for Darius, even in pitched battle.' We have no intention of justifying offensive war, however ultimately conducive to civilisation or supported by the pretext of ancient wrongs. Nor do we deny that Athens might legitimately, however contrary to prudence, invoke the aid of Persia 'against the dominion of another foreigner, at once nearer and more formidable.' But we cannot admit her right to tamper with Persian gold while she knelt in homage before Alexander, and after he had twice been recognised in a Pan-Hellenic Synod as the Generalissimo of Greece.

It was not the weakness, but the baseness of his subject-allies, that made Alexander treat them, not now only, but in the rescript concerning exiles but a year before his death, with less respect than he had shown to the churlish Diogenes. Mr. Grote evidently approves of the plot hatched at Thebes during Alexander's expeditions against the Thracian Triballi and Illyrians. But when he whom they fondly believed to be dead swooped upon that city the patriotism of which paid the penalty which its treason had often deserved, he found nothing but obsequious and cringing instruments. If the fall of Thebes and the cruel revenge of the conqueror remind us

of Frederick Barbarossa at Milan, there were not wanting rival cities to act the part of Pavia and Cremona by insulting her ruins. Sparta alone is exempt from the shame of this deplorable duplicity and vacillation. She had no cause to blush when the 300 panoplies taken at the Granicus were presented to Athens from 'Alexander, son of Philip, and the Greeks, *except the Lacedæmonians.*' And as Philip acted justly when he spared Athens, but punished Thebes after Chæronea, no one can fairly complain because Alexander treated his Persian prisoners more leniently than the subjects of those States which had solemnly sanctioned his expedition.

To that expedition we hasten, the more readily because Mr. Grote does not seem to us to have fully appreciated the prodigious space which it fills in history. Thrice only in historical times has any permanent conquest been made by Europe in Western Asia, and the tide of invasion that sets so steadily from east to west been reversed. The first conquest was due to the individual genius of Alexander, as the second to the national genius of the Roman people; to 'devour the whole earth' was the one aim and destiny of either, and both left more durable monuments of their dominion than the Crusaders who followed in their footsteps above a thousand years later. We have not Mr. Grote's scruples in considering the exploits of Alexander as an essential part of *Hellenic* history. They were achieved by a prince of Hellenic descent and Hellenic character, the acknowledged general of an Hellenic congress, and to gratify Hellenic antipathies. It was the Greek language and civilisation that were spread by them; and few can doubt that, while free institutions are the imperishable legacy of Greece to posterity, her *actual* influence on contemporary history was never so great as under Alexander and his successors. The inner life, and with it the self-consciousness of Greece, is indeed all but extinct—all is darkness there from the death of Demosthenes; but to the surrounding nations the prodigious physical energy now concentrated and thrown outward upon Asia must have appeared more dazzling and commanding than the moral grandeur of the age of Pericles. The

philosopher does not proportion his interest to the magnitude of phenomena, but it is the towering cliff and the earthquake-shock that arrest the attention of common observers.

Those whose political experience is so extended as our own, who have witnessed the rise and fall of empires won by the highest military talents and consolidated with profound sagacity, can ill-imagine the awe with which a Greek regarded the Persian Monarchy. The terror which the 'Great Turk' inspired in the half-fledged Powers of mediæval Europe, the tremendous prestige of the 'Grand Monarque' at the end of the seventeenth century, the abject reverence of the native Hindoo for the East India Company, inadequately represent the overwhelming impression produced by the 'Great King.' As the Ionian gazed on that road which led from the prostrate metropolis of the Lydian princes to the royal city of their conquerors, more distant from him than the Pillars of Hercules from Western Peloponnesus—as he thought of the mountain-chains and rivers which it traversed, too vast to be contained in Greece, yet serving only as divisions between Persian satrapies—as he calculated the treasures of a monarch whose pillow was more valuable than the whole revenue of a Greek republic, and one of whose capitals (Persepolis) was found by Alexander to contain nearly 28,000,000*l.* sterling—he might well feel that, however such a power might fail in its more remote schemes, the seat of empire was inexpugnable. As in Jewish history Egypt and Assyria assume gigantic proportions, whether in their friendship or enmity, so in the family squabbles (such they must have seemed to a Persian satrap) of the Greek Confederation, the dark and colossal form of Persia looms in the background, filling the whole Eastern horizon and the greater part of the known world, no longer dreaded as an aggressor, but all-powerful as an ally or patron. The conversations of Xerxes with Demaratus, of Darius Codomanus with Charidemus, irresistibly recall to our recollection those of the King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver. The punishment of the great king is placed by Plato, somewhat as the fall of the Assyrian oppressor is by Isaiah, as the consumma-

tion of Omnipotent justice; and Æschines introduces, as the crowning wonder of his age, too great for posterity to believe, the astounding disasters of the successor of Xerxes.

Such impressions have not been falsified by the results of modern research. The empire of Cyrus, similar in its rise to all Oriental kingdoms—to that of Saladin, Genghis Khan, and Timur—grew with the rapid growth and wild luxuriance of a nomad government, and absorbed into itself all other Asiatic nationalities. Although, as Heeren has shown, it never progressed beyond supreme nomadic magnificence, with its periodical migrations from Ekbatana to Susa, and from Susa to Babylon, its provincial parks and ‘paradises,’ its tribute levied in kind from the various satrapies, the Persian Monarchy displayed much of the intelligence of a modern despotism. All the despotic vices, it is true, flourished there—the inaccessibility of the ruler, a cumbrous official system, the petty intrigues of the seraglio, the jealousies and frightful vindictiveness of rival favourites, the absence of any control on the Administration save the precarious influence of the priest-caste. Nevertheless, what Philip de Comines mentions as the peculiar happiness of England was in some degree the fortune of this lawless and heterogeneous empire; the consequences of political crimes fell principally on their authors, while the mass of the people enjoyed tranquillity. A rigorous administration of justice, enforced by penalties of such cruelty as ‘despotism alone can devise or execute,’ the separation of civil and military power in the provinces, the vigorous encouragement of agriculture by law as well as by the religion of Zoroaster, had produced a state of material prosperity which was incompatible with the incessant political agitation of small communities. We imitate Xenophon and other Greek authors in directing our attention too exclusively to the ‘upper crust’ of Persian society, to the Pasargadæ, neglecting the other tribes—to the military rather than to the financial or physical resources—to the relations of Persia with Greece, without regard to her dealings with her own subjects or with other nations.

It was against this stupendous Power, the scale and organisation of which present more analogies with the great European monarchies than with Athens at her proudest moment, that Alexander now advanced, after a solemn sacrifice (like that of Hannibal at Gades) to the hero Protesilaus at Elæus. It was eighty years since an armament scarcely inferior to his had set sail westward, amid the prayers and cheers of the Athenian people, to conquer an island which might have been assigned as a fief of office (such donations were ordinary in Persia) to a dignitary of Darius's household. With a force of about 35,000, in which the highest posts were held by native Macedonians, and with a scanty military chest, he invaded an empire the wealth of which was inexhaustible, and which numbered in its army, collected from all parts, but officered chiefly by the conquering Persian race, more Greeks than Alexander could muster. Mr. Grote reminds us that the strength and discipline of the Macedonian army, as well as what he calls the 'War-office arrangements,' were due to Philip. So Gibbon disparages Charlemagne because he succeeded to the military system created by a line of heroes. But Mr. Grote himself would admit that the general who 'surpassed his age in provident and even long-sighted combinations,' and who handled kingdoms with the ease of Napoleon, would certainly have formed such an army had not his father already done so.

Military history, to be understood, must be studied in detail. Mr. Grote follows the earlier campaigns of Alexander in his own clear and business-like manner, gives fresh interest to the well-known names of Granicus, Issus, and Arbela, and develops the less obvious but no less masterly operations by which Alexander reduced every Power capable of annoying his rear. It is quite refreshing to strengthen our faith in generalship, shaken by the events of the last three years, with the account of battles in which valour was always supported by skill; sieges in which the best mechanical resources of that age were employed, not only with rare perseverance, but with unflinching success; marches in which the greatest natural



difficulties were overcome with very small loss. Sometimes the Homeric hero, sometimes the scientific strategist, predominates; but caution or boldness is equally fortunate, because exactly adapted to the emergency. The proverbial good fortune of Alexander is no more than the *fortuna Populi Romani*, or the constant good luck of Pompey, which Cicero alleges as a substantive reason for appointing him to an important command. The sieges of Halicarnassus, Tyre, and Gaza, were works of immense labour, and the last two would infallibly have miscarried in hands less able and energetic. The battles of Granicus and Issus were carried by a dashing charge, though not till after careful reconnoitring; but the dispositions before the battle of Arbela are those of a consummate general. The Cilician and Syrian gates were left, it is true, almost undefended, and the posts at the Uxian and Susian passes were surprised by a neglected mountain-track, like the band of Leonidas at Thermopylæ; but the rock of Choriènes, which Mr. Grote says 'he was also fortunate enough to reduce,' was not taken without a combination of measures which, Bishop Thirlwall justly observes, 'would have appeared to a common eye utterly impracticable.'

Mr. Grote does not willingly or consciously extenuate the greatness of Alexander. He sees it, but he does not feel it. He describes effectively his victories and their consequences, he examines original authorities with a fidelity which, so far as we have been able to test it, is unimpeachable. But he does not altogether rise to his subject. His narrative is adequate, but not stirring. We miss, in short, the heartfelt interest which shed lustre on the last great sea-fight of the Athenians in the harbour of Syracuse. We would readily sacrifice the impartiality which we have gained for the enthusiasm which we have lost. 'Hellenism, properly so called—the aggregate of habits, sentiments, energies, and intelligence manifested by the Greeks during their epoch of autonomy'—is 'stagnant and suspended.' True. It has done its work in the world, and is soon to be superseded by other and ruder agencies. But there is a sublimity in grandeur of effects, as

well as in nobility of sentiments ; and, in this point of view, all Hellenic contests, and even the exploits of Agesilaus and the Ten Thousand, are mere forays or trials of strength compared with the death-struggle which, as Alexander told Sisygambis, was to decide ' the mastery of Asia.'

The surrender of Babylon and Susa, with the demolition of Persepolis in the beginning of B.C. 330, forms the natural division in Alexander's career between the conquest of the western and that of the eastern provinces of Persia. The latter is described with less minuteness by Mr. Grote than by Dr. Thirlwall. According to him, projects which occupied this ' insatiate aggressor ' on the banks of the Jaxartes, the Indus, and the Hyphasis, can hardly be regarded by the historian of Greece as included within the range of his subject, and in this judgment we acquiesce. Suffice it to say that the last seven years of Alexander's life display the same untiring activity and rapidity of thought and action which place him, with Bonaparte and Timur, among the foremost of human conquerors. He pursues Darius till this true type of an Oriental sultan, who owed his crown to the eunuch Bagoas, was murdered by Bessus, follows up Bessus as he had followed Darius, and Spitamenes as he had Bessus. He assaults the hill-forts of Bactria and Afghanistan, and the mountaineers of Mardia and Parætacene, from a pure intolerance of adversaries or obstacles. He sacrifices the loveliest districts of Sogdiana to an impulse of passion, and restores the rich territories of Taxilus and Porus from an impulse of generosity. The red line on Mr. Grote's map that begins at Pella ends, where the greatest Asiatic empires have begun, on the banks of the Jaxartes in one direction, while in another it traverses the Punjab, and is only cut short on the Sutlej because the Macedonian soldiers could not keep pace with the restless ambition of their general. Yet they had more than once reposed while he, with a picked corps of ' Companions,' was scouring the surrounding districts. One Alexandria had been founded on the westernmost mouth of the Nile, another commanded the approach to the Pass of Bamian, between Cabul

and Bakh, over which Alexander had passed by a route longer and possibly more hazardous than that of Hannibal over the Western Alps. The descent of the Indus, and the frightful march through the Gedrosian Desert, complete the campaigns but not the toils of Alexander. He had already revisited all his three capitals, punished with pitiless severity offending satraps, reorganised his army and crushed an alarming mutiny, superintended in person great commercial designs on the Tigris and Euphrates, and conceived schemes so vast as to be abandoned in despair by his successors, when death—a death which ‘affected either the actual condition or the probable future’ of every existing nation—overtook him at Babylon. In his dying bequest of the kingdom ‘To the ablest’ we read the history of an heroic life.

Never had thought so wedded fact as in the splendid career of Alexander, and never were human aspirations so signally dashed as by his death. The Asiatic hosts had recoiled before him like the ghosts in Hades before the flashing arms of Æneas, who broke in upon their rest. But it was in Greece that both his victories and his death must have produced the greatest impression. He had carried his arms into all those countries that had dazzled the Greek imagination—Persia, the type of earthly magnificence; Egypt and India, the mythical sources of religion and philosophy. If we conceive the effect of his successive despatches, couched in the style of Napoleon’s bulletins, recording exploits such as a heathen could only attribute to a god on earth, but followed by the intelligence that Alexander had sickened and died like other men, we can understand the mixture of consternation and incredulity with which this news was received.

Mr. Grote boldly treats the assumption of Divine parentage as a conviction entertained in sober earnest by Alexander himself and his admirers. Christianity has radically changed the ideal of superhuman greatness. It was not their freedom from, but their participation in, mortal passions that elevated the Olympian gods above the brute forces of primæval theogony. Power, guided by an inexorable will—not goodness,

but the absence of all weakness—seemed to Greeks the character ‘likest God’s.’ The army, which was so indifferent to justice as to acquiesce in the assassination of Parmenio uncondemned, and to vote that the death of Kleitus was deserved, hardly felt the want of the ‘quality of mercy’ in the object of their adoration. Even Dr. Thirlwall calls the murder of Amyntas and others on his accession ‘acts of justice.’ Philotas and the other Macedonian victims of his terrible ferocity were unpopular with the troops; the barbarous treatment of Bessus and the brave Syrians was agreeable to the regular practice of a Roman triumph, and not much worse than the punishment prepared by the most chivalrous Prince in Christendom for the defenders of Calais. Divine honours became in the last days of Rome the expression of a political civility. In Alexander’s soldiers there was a stronger motive than this: a consciousness that the formidable being whose wrath was death, whether to friends or enemies, was indispensable to their existence.

The idea, no doubt, was of gradual growth. Repeatedly wounded, and sharing the hardships which destroyed a great part of his army south of the Oxus and in Beloochistan, he seemed to possess a charmed life. After his hairbreadth adventure among the Malii, he was hailed by the Phalanx with superstitious devotion, as the one general to whom they could implicitly trust their lives; the wiser must have seen that his was the one mind that could sustain the magnificent fabric created by his genius. No mortal, none even of the gods, was related to have performed such prodigies. He had surmounted snowy ridges attempted in vain by Hercules; he had penetrated beyond the fabulous Hydaspes into regions unconquered by Dionysus; he had been expressly recognised as the son of Zeus by the oracle of Ammon. The grand old idea of a Divine Nemesis against the greatest of the sons of men who ‘give not God the glory’ was well-nigh extinct; it was now only philosophers like Kallisthenes who could discern ‘that the distinction between gods and men was one which could not be confounded without impiety and wrong.’ Desperate

and Titanic enterprises demand a faith beyond mere animal courage, and the spirit of the 'God-fearing' soldiers of Cromwell is travestied in various ways by the pure fatalism of the Mussulman, the half-fatalist, half-personal confidence inspired by Napoleon, or the purely personal apotheosis of Alexander.

It is a Christian, and not a heathen idea; it is the task of posterity, and not of contemporaries; to bring the hero to the bar of conscience, and to disallow the most illustrious achievements where they are not directed to an end morally justifiable. The benefit of mankind, scruples, right motives—these are terms of Christian ethics, with little influence on the practice even of Christian conquerors. Egotism—the intense and all-absorbing desire to fulfil the promptings of a dominant will—has been the principle of most of those designs that have convulsed the world for good or evil. In Alexander, extreme violence of character with 'exorbitant self-estimation' had ripened into an unique and solitary ambition, to which his matchless conquests did but add fuel, and which no flattery could satisfy. To crush Persia—to be master of the world—became to him no longer motives, but the law and condition of his being. Guizot warns us that there is such an epoch in the life of the greatest conquerors, and, though Dr. Thirlwall will not admit that Alexander's head was ever turned, the reasonable interpretation of facts is here on the side of Niebuhr and Mr. Grote. He was hard-hearted, as William the Conqueror was hard-hearted, because he was supremely selfish—selfish with the selfishness of a god-like isolation. His general benevolence was no more than the Greek 'philanthropy,' the outward courtesy with which he received the Athenian ambassadors after the destruction of Thebes; but his emotions of friendship, so inconstant towards the great Aristotle, assumed an uncontrollable intensity towards Hephæstion, a kindred spirit, and, withal, 'phil-Alexander.'

If we ask what is the secret and measure of Alexander's fame, Mr. Grote answers that he 'overawes the imagination, more than any other personage of antiquity, by the matchless development of all that constitutes effective force, as an indi-

vidual warrior'—here contrasted with the personal cowardice of Darius—'and as organiser and leader of armed masses; not merely the blind impetuosity ascribed by Homer to Ares, but also the intelligent, methodized, and all-subduing compression which he personifies in Athênê. But all his great qualities were fit for use only against enemies, in which category, indeed, were numbered all mankind, known and unknown, except those who chose to submit to him.' Whether Alexander, essentially a man of one idea, would have devoted himself, had his life been prolonged, to consolidating and improving the numerous races whose representatives thronged the streets of the majestic city in which he died, or would have marched on till nothing remained to conquer, none can really decide. Mr. Grote takes the latter view.

'Exalted to this prodigious grandeur, Alexander was at the time of his death little more than thirty-two years old, the age at which a citizen of Athens was growing into important commands; ten years less than the age for a Consul at Rome; two years younger than the age at which Timur first acquired the crown and began his foreign conquests. His extraordinary bodily powers were unabated; he had acquired a large stock of military experience; and, what was still more important, his appetite for further conquests was as voracious, and his readiness to purchase it at the largest cost of toil or danger as complete, as it had been when he first crossed the Hellespont. Great as his past career had been, his future achievements, with such increased means and experience, were likely to be yet greater. His ambition would have been satisfied with nothing less than the conquest of the whole habitable world as then known; and, if his life had been prolonged, he would probably have accomplished it. Nowhere (so far as our knowledge reaches) did there reside any military Power capable of making head against him; nor were his soldiers, when he commanded them, daunted or baffled by any extremity of cold, heat, or fatigue. The patriotic feelings of Livy disposed him to maintain that Alexander, had he invaded Italy and assailed Romans or Samnites, would have failed,

and perished like his relative, Alexander of Epirus'—a sentiment which originated with the Epirotic prince himself, who complained that he, in his expeditions into Italy, had fallen upon the men's apartments, while his nephew, in invading Asia, had fallen upon the chamber of the women.

'But,' continues Mr. Grote, 'this conclusion cannot be accepted. . . . I do not think that even the Romans could have resisted Alexander the Great, though it is certain that he never, throughout all his long marches, encountered such enemies as they, nor even such as Samnites and Lucanians—combining courage, patriotism, discipline, with effective arms both for defence and for close combat.'

With the concluding remarks of Mr. Grote we substantially agree. We do not believe that Alexander deliberately intended to infuse an Hellenic spirit into Asia—for where could an Hellenic spirit be kept alive, except in small republics?—any more than that his schemes of universal conquest were suggested by scientific curiosity. On the other hand, it is too much to argue from his change of dress and system of administration 'that he desired nothing better than to take up the traditions of the Persian Empire.' If he did not follow the advice of a preceptor of encyclopædic catholicity in speculation, but Hellenic to bigotry in sympathies, we need not suppose that 'his preferences turned more and more in favour of the servile Asiatic sentiment and customs.' Nor can we found any conclusion on the fact that he did not earn the admiration which Gibbon lavishes on Genghis as a legislator, or that he did not resemble Charlemagne in the encouragement which he extended to men of letters. That Alexander's conduct and ideas were due to no preconceived scheme, but self-developed, and therefore progressive, we know; what they would have become, we cannot say. After all, it was before he had passed the ordinary limits of political minority that the grave closed over this finished hero, whose whole character, no less than his actions, was hopelessly unjustifiable according to our present standard, but who is the perfect ideal of antique and classical greatness.

Mr. Grote does not follow out the separate histories of the great fragments of Alexander's empire, and dismisses in two chapters what occupies a great part of Dr. Thirlwall's last two volumes. We think he is right. Though much of Indian history for the last century belongs equally to the annals of England, yet the historian of England is distinct from the historian of British India. But, whereas India is a dependency governed by a merchant-company in Leadenhall Street,<sup>1</sup> Egypt, Syria and Asia Minor were from the first independent kingdoms, disconnected as well from the Macedonian Monarchy as from the Greek republics.

To do justice to the enlightened despotism of these Græco-Oriental dynasties, we must consider the peculiarity of their foundation. The dismemberment of empires among different branches of a royal family and among powerful satraps or emirs is frequent enough, and the acknowledged tendency of an ill-assorted aggregate of various races to break up and reunite itself into smaller units partly justifies the contempt with which Niebuhr treats Alexander's schemes. But the truth is that, after the partition made at Triparadisus, the fate of the Empire was abandoned to a mere scramble, to the result of which nothing contributed but the personal abilities and mutual self-interest of the conflicting generals. Meanwhile, every member of the royal family had been exterminated: Kynane, Eurydike, and Philip Aridæus by the bloodthirsty Olympias; Olympias herself, and soon afterwards Roxana and her son Alexander, by Cassander; the young prince Herakles (son of Alexander by Barsine) by Polysperchon, and Kleopatra (sister of Alexander) by Antigonus. It was one of those epochs when the checks of authority and public opinion are for a while suspended, and the bad passions of men break forth into shameless extravagance. The exuberant development of military talent cannot redeem the death of all those lofty ideas and political virtues that almost sanctify, in the eyes of some, the perfidy and cruelties of earlier Grecian history.

<sup>1</sup> This article appeared two years before the India Act of 1858.



Eumenes might rival Alexander in the skill of his manœuvres; Demetrius Poliorketes carried to perfection the use of military engines, first organised by Philip; Kraterus applied in Ætolia the experience of mountain-warfare acquired in the Paropamisus; Seleukus braved on the Ganges those mighty armies of Northern India the report of which had dismayed the troops of Alexander; but Ptolemy alone has won from his contemporaries the praise of an ambition unsullied by deeds of blood, and from posterity that of a wise and beneficent administrator. The historian of Greece may well turn with distaste from a period the events of which are military, not civil, the acts of princes, not of nations.

Mr. Grote is led by his desire to give artistic completeness to his work—a merit which ought in fairness to be set against the want of art in his style—to devote a chapter to the ‘outlying Hellenic cities’; in other words, to the affairs of Marseilles and its colonies, Heraclea in Pontus, and Bosphorus (near Kertch). The former has more than a commercial interest, as an ancient republic which manifested a Venetian sagacity both in its home and foreign policy. The two latter were despotically governed, the one till B.C. 281, the other till it became part of the Roman Empire; but, except as outposts of civilisation, they fail to excite the sympathy of a modern reader. Greece, as we conceive it, does not include all the semi-barbarous particles of Hellenism scattered over the face of the earth. To explore these is the task of the antiquarian rather than of the philosopher; they have, properly speaking, no history, and did but prepare the way for a more enduring empire.

Hellenic life enters a new phase after the death of Alexander. It is no longer Greek communities, but individual Greeks; no longer Greece proper, but colonies planted by Macedonian kings, beginning with Philip, in Europe, Asia, and Africa; no longer Greek institutions, but the Greek language, character, and manners—that perpetuate the sacred fire of Greek civilisation. This, however, while it cuts short the thread of history, is no subject for lamentation, being part

of an economy too universal to be impugned. It may be true that 'the Greeks of Antioch, or Alexandria, or Scleukeia, were not like citizens of Athens or Thebes, nor even like men of Tarentum or Ephesus.' No doubt the 'Hellenized Asiatic' would have been considered 'by Sophocles, by Thucydides, by Socrates, as a foreigner with Grecian speech, exterior varnish, and superficial manifestations.' And so, the American backwoodsman might be regarded by our more delicate nerves as a lawless and unscrupulous ruffian. But as the latter may possibly be the best representative of Anglo-Saxon energy in a new continent, the former may have transfused no mean amount of Hellenic cultivation into those savage regions which the pure Greeks of the fifth century B.C. could never have penetrated. Modern research, aided by an unusual abundance of coins, has proved that it was possible for a Grecian principality, insulated among the mountains of Balkh and Bokhara, and soon detached from the Babylonian Kingdom, not only to retain the characteristic features of Greek nationality, but to colour perceptibly the philosophical system of India, on which it bordered. Mr. Grote characterises the Administration of the Græco-Asiatic kings as 'not Hellenic, but completely despotic.' Nevertheless, not to dwell on the Greek constitutions of particular towns, as Alexandria and Ptolemais in Upper Egypt, the spirit of Hellenism was so firmly established in the East as to resist the assimilating power of the Roman Empire, and to survive, long after the Legions had melted away, the contagion of Mahommedanism.

Meantime, the Western colonies of Greece, which had often outstripped the mother-country in the race of philosophy, carried to an extravagant pitch the anomalies which now beset her policy. The constitution established by Timoleon at Syracuse was superseded by an oligarchy like those created by Antipater in central Greece. This was again overturned, and, in the long struggles between the exiles and the dominant party, Agathocles, a dashing soldier-of-fortune and a profligate politician, found means to compass his own ends. 'He was of the stamp of Gelon and the elder Dionysius,' . . . and in

‘the acquisition as well as the maintenance of power displayed an extent of energy, perseverance, and military resource not surpassed by any one, even of the generals formed in Alexander’s school.’ He had just that mixture of cunning and daring suitable to one who would gamble desperately for a throne. He cannot be referred to any of those classes of despots described by Mr. Grote in an earlier volume. To the political character of Ludovico Sforza and a temperament like Cæsar Borgia, he added the merciless determination of Alexander and the reckless audacity of a Scandinavian viking. ‘Agathokles is a man of force and fraud, consummate in the use of both. His whole life is a series of successful adventures and strokes of bold ingenuity to extricate himself from difficulties.’ Division of interests has ever been the bane of Sicily; it was deplored by Hermocrates when the Athenian fleet was off the coast; it was deplored by Falcandus when Henry VII. with a German army was descending from the Alps. To this discord, over which he gloated like a desperado in a plague-stricken city, Agathokles owed the success of the *coups d’état* by which he crushed Sicilian liberty; the knowledge of like disaffection in Africa inspired the *ruses de guerre* by which he nearly made himself master of Carthage. That he died, in the plenitude of power, a victim to private and not to public hatred, is to be attributed to the want of that rare heroism which rushes on a contest in which the foremost is sure to fall. That he failed in his more brilliant projects was due to the unsteadiness of purpose that, happily for mankind, is characteristic of unprincipled adventurers.

We do not propose to follow Mr. Grote through the weary record of Grecian dishonour. The whole interest of his ninety-fifth and ninety-sixth chapters is concentrated on Demosthenes and Phokion, the great men who overshadow the ruins of a great people, now bandied to and fro between Macedonian generals. Phokion, says Plutarch, told the Athenians that they must either have power themselves or submit to him who had it. It was the curse of the times that honour and prudence could not be made to consist. The

party of movement is, in our days, the party of liberty; then it was the advocate of submission. When we read of the idolatrous worship of Demetrius Poliorketes, we are inclined, with Phokion, to accept the humiliation of Athens as inevitable. When we think of the inherent might of a good cause, we side with Demosthenes. A modern statesman might have retired into rural seclusion, and devoted himself to enlightening or satirising his age. So did Cicero. A citizen of Athens was forbidden to stand aloof in a sedition, and Demosthenes grappled with the antagonist whom Phokion caressed. Both were patriots; each in his way was a political martyr. But Demosthenes wins our hearts, not only as a contributor to the common treasury of noble sentiments, but as the champion of those pure though limited interests out of which general well-being is compounded.

Mr. Grote pauses on the brink of the 'gulf of Grecian nullity,' which separates classical Greece from what Mr. Grote styles, with unfeigned contempt, 'the Greece of Polybius.' He has added a solid work to English literature, a work which executes all that it professes. He has enabled the most phlegmatic of nations to realise the life of the most volatile. In short, though an Englishman, he has 'written a book.' Mr. Grote knows his subject too well to put forward his history as exhaustive and final; but we hope the time is distant when such a writer will cease to have interest for English scholars and gentlemen.

*COUNT CAVOUR*<sup>1</sup>

BEFORE Italy is completely 'made,' or the last sneers of her detractors have died away, the grave will have closed over the master-spirit of her councils—the Themistocles of the Italian Revolution. Never since the death of Sir Robert Peel, in 1850, has any European country had such cause to mourn over an individual statesman; nor must national partiality deter us from confessing that, of the two, the life of Cavour was incalculably the more important to Europe. From the year 1848 the eyes of the world have been fixed upon Italy, the destinies of Italy have been centred in Sardinia, and Count Cavour has been the presiding genius of Sardinian policy. No wonder that, as his life ebbed away under the subtle assaults of disease and the loss of blood, which is the favourite resource of Italian surgery, great crowds blocked up the avenues leading to his hotel, and manifested the deepest emotion as the last sacraments of the Catholic Church were borne in procession to his bedside. If the French people thronged the street in which Mirabeau lay dying, and millions of English artisans read with tears in their eyes the bulletins recording the death of him who sacrificed power to fill their homes with plenty, the Italians owe a still deeper debt to Cavour. The extent of his services is to be measured by the whole interval between the Italy of 1848 and the Italy of 1861—an interval short, indeed, in duration, but charged with events that will occupy a vast space in history. During this period the biography of Cavour is the biography of the leading State of the Italian nation.

<sup>1</sup> This sketch of Cavour's life was written for immediate publication, with very imperfect knowledge, in a few hours, on the evening of June 6, 1861. It is here reprinted without alteration.

Born at Turin in 1810, Cavour, like his great rival, Garibaldi, was by extraction a citizen of the county of Nice. Posterity will scarcely care to discuss the question whether or not his father was a *parvenu*, or to carry the genealogy higher than the great statesman himself, who has left no heir to his illustrious name and princely fortune. His contemporaries, however, ought to know that his family is one of the most ancient in Italy, that his elder brother is the Marquis of Cavour, and that the second of his two names (Camillo Benso) bears witness to a patrician pedigree. It is probable that his powers were slowly matured, although for the first half of the present century Italy offered so narrow a career to ambition that we need seek no other reason for his comparatively late entrance upon public life. Few, however, have enjoyed such varied experiences, or laid the foundations of a political education so deeply, as Cavour. He was trained for the military career in the Royal Military Academy at Turin, and nothing but his own independence of character and aversion to the life of a courtier prevented his being permanently attached to the household of Charles Felix, in which he underwent a short probation. Meanwhile, he was studying with the utmost eagerness what may be called *par excellence* the political sciences, and in particular those which bear on the wealth of nations. If the great work of Adam Smith was not his first introduction to the English language, it was long his favourite manual, and we have his own authority for asserting that he derived his financial views chiefly from this and other English authors. When, in opposition to the wishes of his family, he resolved on making the British metropolis the chief object of his travels, we have a curious testimony, in the shape of a private despatch, still extant, to the 'advanced' opinions which he already held. The French, in their anxiety to appropriate all success to themselves, have attributed his subsequent career to his appreciation of the 'principles of 1789,' forgetting that these principles, so far as they are sound or practical at all, had their origin in this country, where Count Cavour had abundant opportunity of

studying them at the fountain-head during a residence of several years. It was then that he formed those friendships in England to which he so often referred with pride, and strengthened, if he did not contract, those habits of thought which, surviving the reproach of Anglomania, have made his statesmanship an unique phenomenon in Italy, in marked contrast with the peculiarities of Italian intellect and character.

In 1842, Count Cavour returned to Turin, and patiently watched the signs of the times under the well-meant but capricious *régime* of Charles Albert. For the next five years we have little trace of the direction of his activity, except in a few literary productions. Soon after his return from Great Britain he published his 'Considerations on the Present State and Future Prospects of Ireland' in the 'Bibliothèque Universelle' of Geneva, which were subsequently translated into English; and we know also that he wrote an article on Piedmontese railways in a French periodical. In the year 1847, he established the 'Risorgimento' in partnership with Count Balbo, and in concert with three other aristocratic coadjutors—Count Santa Rosa, the Chevalier Buoncompagni, and one of the D'Azeglios. In this journal are to be found the 'Cavourian ideas' in embryo—the theories of political and administrative reform, the sober aspirations after Italian unity, or 'unification,' as it was then called—the belief, now obsolete, in the possibility of combining Naples, Rome, and Piedmont in a Liberal crusade—and the bold views respecting the temporalities of the Church which have since become identified with his name.

The turning-point of Count Cavour's life was the fatal campaign that ended with Novara. During this disastrous period of alternate hopes and fears, spasmodic efforts and half-hearted co-operation, he remained in the background. After it, he emerged one of the foremost figures in Italy, taking an intermediate place between the 'Moderates' and the party of action, and reconciling the practical aims of the one with the comprehensive patriotism of the other. In 1849

he entered the Chamber of Deputies, and in the following year succeeded Santa Rosa as Minister of Commerce and Agriculture. From this epoch his political career naturally divides itself into four stages. The earliest represents his Home policy, first as the colleague of D'Azeglio, and afterwards as President of the Council, up to the commencement of the Crimean War. The second includes that war and its immediate consequences to Sardinia. The third extends from 1856 to the cession of Savoy and Nice to France. The last, and greatest, is that which nothing but his premature death has cut short.

The principal measures of the first period were the inauguration of a Free-Trade policy, the promotion of education, the appropriation of monastic property to State purposes, the development of the material resources of the country by the construction of railways, the improvement of postal communication, the reform of the finances, and the entire re-organisation of the army and national fortifications. To appreciate the merits of the man who achieved these marvels within the space of three or four years, we must understand the political materials, or, rather, the want of all political materials, with which he had to deal. To explain and illustrate the demoralisation of the nation at this crisis is beyond our present scope, but it has been eloquently sketched by a quarterly contemporary:—

'The difficulties which met Cavour on his first accession to power were such as even now it is difficult thoroughly to estimate. The defeat of Novara had left the Piedmontese kingdom humiliated and weakened, and yet fatally implicated in the insurrectionary movement which each succeeding event in Europe contributed to discredit. There the Church and a semi-feudal landed aristocracy possessed a strong traditional power. The whole of the Administration of the little State was singularly backward and imperfect. Its legal and its commercial system, its municipal institutions; the organisation of its army, of education, of the public service, and of religious bodies; its tariff, its roads, and system of communi-



cation, and, lastly, its own national unity, were below those of nearly every other State in the Peninsula, except the Roman itself. In the other provinces of Italy monarchical sentiments had not yet begun to exist, and national greatness was known only in the language of insurrectionary appeals. All the sad honours of the late campaign had been won by the old municipal spirit, and Manin and Garibaldi had upheld the glory of historic republics. The strength with which, upon the shattered efforts of the national uprising, the old empire of the foreigner had been established, had crushed out all but the hope of feeble palliatives and evasions in the minds of the more cautious, and desperate conspiracies in those of the bolder. Parties were swaying between hopeless submission and hopeless rebellion, amidst a state of things in Europe which seemed at each step to be extinguishing the last embers of revolution.'

It was out of this chaos that Count Cavour brought something like a Cosmos, and the success of his financial Ministry, beginning with 1851, and signalised by his masterly speeches on Nigra's financial project and the treaty of commerce with France in 1852, would have sufficed to create an ordinary reputation. In the latter year, however, it became evident to far-sighted men that all these internal reforms were but means to an ulterior end, and that this end was the consolidation of Italian liberty. Nothing less than this could be signified by the separation of Cavour from D'Azeglio and Gavagno, on the avowed ground that they were temporising with interests which admitted of no delay or compromise. When Cavour, after a second visit to France and England, became Premier, in November 1852, the die was fairly cast; and everything that followed, including the futile attempt to obtain a Liberal *concordat* from Rome, and even the rôle of Piedmont in the Crimean War, seemed but the legitimate development of a preconceived idea. Henceforth there was no alternative but a Cavourian or an anti-Cavourian policy.

No one can now be concerned to deny that the second stage of Count Cavour's Administration was less the complement than the consummation of the first. With a rare pene-

tration scarcely distinguishable from actual prescience, he saw his opportunity, and resolved to turn the quarrel between Russia and Austria to the account of Italy. It was with this view that he accepted, and perhaps suggested, the invitation of England to join an offensive confederation against Russia, and penned his famous manifesto of January 12, 1856. The conduct of the Sardinian contingent before Sebastopol is too well known to need any eulogy here. But it should be remembered that the credit of retrieving Novara, and organising a Sardinian force that could compete in efficiency with the veterans of England and France, must be shared almost equally by La Marmora with Cavour. Upon the conclusion of peace, many Sardinian patriots, and, perhaps, even Cavour himself, were not a little disappointed. They felt that they could ill afford to make such sacrifices for nothing, and that two or three Duchies of Central Italy would have been no unreasonable reward. Failing this, Count Cavour, in conjunction with the Marquis Villamarina, assumed an energetic attitude in the Congress of Paris, and openly arraigned Austria before the bar of European public opinion. The great speech which he delivered on his return to Turin contains the following memorable words:—

‘The course which we have followed for some years past has placed us several steps in advance. For the first time in our history, the Italian Question has been brought forward and discussed before an European Council, not, as at other times, with the design of aggravating the ills of Italy, but with the object, loudly proclaimed, of applying a remedy to her wrongs and avowing the sympathy which the Great Powers entertain for her cause.’

The prophecy was verified; voluntary subscriptions for the fortification of Alessandria followed close on the peace, and in every subsequent conference on European affairs Sardinia took part in her own right, and almost insensibly grew, as if by anticipation of an Italian monarchy, into a sixth Great Power.

Whether we are to date the Franco-Sardinian alliance

against Austria from the interview of Plombières, or should rather regard it as the tacitly-accepted result of common interests and common antipathies, it is certain that it was the handiwork of Cavour. Nor must we shrink from admitting that the price of French co-operation—the cession of Savoy and Nice—was contemplated by him, if it was not expressly stipulated, from the first. We can hardly believe that two men so astute as Cavour and Louis Napoleon would venture to practise dissimulation towards each other, and it is more satisfactory, on the whole, to conclude that the whole cost, of political character as well as of territory, had been counted beforehand, and was included in the same bargain with Prince Napoleon's marriage. If Cavour erred, he erred in common with great and high-minded men, who, driven to elect between expediency of the highest order and a duty vanishing into a sentiment, have given a casting-vote to the former. In this campaign, as in all the other enterprises of Cavour, we trace the same cautious and tentative method of operation which, tempered with a wise audacity, constitutes no mean part of the art of ruling. Fortunately for his designs, the Austrian ultimatum was insulting enough to rally round him the whole country, yet his reply was moderate, though firm; and it was not till after the battle of Magenta and the evacuation of Milan that he ventured to mention the emancipation of the whole peninsula. Then came the strange and still unaccountable Peace of Villafranca, and Cavour for the first time seemed disposed to throw up his mighty task in disgust. He had once before withdrawn from office to facilitate the settlement of the great standing dispute about the rights and privileges of the clergy, but his retirement was hardly more than nominal. Now, at length, it appeared possible that the destinies of Italy might be shaped by other hands. This, however, was not to be. In presence of the annexation of Lombardy and the movements in Central Italy, the Rattazzi Ministry broke down, Cavour was recalled, nominally by the King, but really by the Italian people, to the helm of State, and the fourth stage of his political career began.

That stage is cut short, but not concluded. His work remains a majestic torso, to be completed by other—need we say, inferior?—artists. It is seldom, however, in the affairs of practical life, that the demands of the æsthetic faculty are so fully gratified as they are in the present aspect of this great historical drama. For a while, as Garibaldi overran Sicily and Calabria, flashing upon the effete system and spiritless armies of Neapolitan despotism like Æneas among the Shades, public enthusiasm was concentrated on the hero, to the disparagement of the statesman. It was felt, and truly felt, that Garibaldi could inspire, while Cavour could only control, and that Garibaldi was free from the taint of paltering with the self-interested friends of Italy. Scrupulous minds could not reconcile the professions of the Cabinet of Turin at the outset of the expedition with their ready acquiescence in its results and eagerness to appropriate its triumphs. It is still hard to believe that every act in these great transactions can be squared with the rule of political consistency, or that posterity, which will have so much to admire, will have nothing to forgive. We may, perhaps, rejoice that we had not the keeping of Cavour's conscience during this, the agony of Italian regeneration; but if the nobleness of the end and the complete success of the means cannot justify everything, let us at least suspend our judgment till the gaps in our knowledge are filled up, and the missing links in the speeches and despatches of the departed statesman can be supplied. We know enough to be sure that there is much that we cannot know, and that the course which seems to us so tortuous may, from a loftier point of view, be straight and direct. If Garibaldi has lived to see that Cavour and himself were following the same object by different paths, we may well hope that the details of his policy will be vindicated, as its sagacity has been so triumphantly demonstrated. ✓

We shall not attempt to recapitulate the events of the past year, by which Cavour will hereafter be chiefly judged. Not that any one epoch of his life displays characteristics essentially different from any other. In the two most remark-

able speeches of the last twelve months—that on the concession of authority to Government to accept annexations, and that on the Roman Question—may be discerned precisely the same train of thought that animates his earlier speeches and writings. In the latter he appeals, as ever, to the ultimate verdict of public opinion, and to the ever-growing testimony of facts to the soundness of his policy.

The influence of Cavour upon Italy was in some respects similar to that of the First Napoleon upon France. As Napoleon was no genuine Frenchman, so Cavour was no genuine Italian in mind, or temperament, or even in accent; and he was the stronger for this diversity. Under the shade of that cold and impassable exterior was room for an undergrowth of political virtues hardly known in Italy, and nothing but his solidity and indomitable power of resistance would have stemmed the shocks which even his versatility could not always avoid. In spite of a manner never very conciliatory, and sometimes disdainful, his popularity was almost unbounded. The confidence reposed in him throughout by a devoted majority, after successive appeals to the country, reminds us of the support given to Sir Robert Peel between 1841 and 1845; and in one instance a private individual left a considerable fortune at his absolute disposal for the benefit of public education. Perhaps his greatest quality as a speaker was his extraordinary faculty of seizing the salient points of the subject, as his greatest quality as a statesman was penetration. His conceptions were not original. Some he borrowed from Gioberti, some from Farini, some from Mazzini himself. But he carried them out with a steadiness, and sometimes even with an *insouciance*, that were all his own. It remained for him to rescue Italy from the reproach which Guizot put upon it—that will and intellect are there dissevered, that her men of thought are mere *doctrinaires* and theorists, and her men of action mere empirics. So well did he understand his people and his times, that much ingenuity has been expended in proving that he comprehended in himself all the conflicting elements of the Italian movement, and for this

reason was able to forecast long before the horoscope of his country. It is needless to say that this romantic view cannot be sustained. Cavour acted for the present, and in so doing he did much to mould the future. We need not exalt his penetration to satisfy an impossible idea ; it is enough for his fame that he justly interpreted the wants of Italy, and knew how to execute that which he had conceived. He has left none like him ; and many a true-hearted Italian, as he follows his corpse to the tomb, will be tempted to pronounce him *felicem opportunitate mortis*, as he remembers how few in the long catalogue of Italian liberators have died, like Cavour, before the memory of their achievements has been obliterated by fresh disasters.

*THE EVANGELICAL REVIVAL OF THE  
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY*<sup>1</sup>

THE Evangelical Revival, specially identified with the name of John Wesley, has long since won for itself an important place in the social history of the eighteenth century, and has now been made the subject of an interesting little monograph by Canon Overton, in Professor Creighton's series entitled 'Epochs of Church History.' Mr. Overton's volume, however, is not so much an historical narrative as a collection of biographical sketches and essays upon various aspects of the movement. One chapter is devoted to John Wesley himself, another to George Whitefield and others of Wesley's immediate colleagues, a third to a comparison between Methodism and Evangelicalism—a term for which the author apologises—a fourth to the leading Evangelical clergy of the century, and a fifth to the contemporary Evangelical laity. Then we have separate chapters on the Literature, the Doctrines, and the Results, of the Revival, with a discerning estimate of its weak points and of the opposition which it encountered. All these topics are treated in an independent and charitable spirit; nor would it be easy to gather from Mr. Overton's temperate criticisms to which school of theological opinion he may profess to belong. But, after all, we miss that which the character of the volume would have led us to expect—a consecutive account of the rise and progress of Methodism in this country. For this we must still look to more elaborate biographical works, like Southey's and Tyerman's Lives of Wesley, or learned monographs on the

<sup>1</sup> A Review of Canon Overton's volume on this subject, reprinted from *Macmillan's Magazine*. 1886.

movement, such as that to be found in Sir James Stephen's admirable 'Essays on Ecclesiastical Biography.'

The part played by the University of Oxford in the early history of Methodism is treated far too lightly by Mr. Overton. During the first half of the eighteenth century, that University was equally degenerate both as a place of religion and as a place of learning. Too much has been made, it is true, of Gibbon's malicious strictures upon it; but the evidence is conclusive that, during the two generations when Oxford Jacobitism was at its height, Oxford education was at its lowest ebb. The influence of religion was no less weakened in the University, and had, indeed, been on the decline ever since the Restoration. Notwithstanding their boisterous demonstrations of sympathy with the High Church Party in politics, many of its senior members, both clerical and lay, secretly leaned to Rationalism, and the Deism which came in with the Revolution of 1688 became rife again under the Georges. In the year 1730, three students were expelled for holding Deistical tenets: several Heads of Colleges issued a joint notice censuring the spread of Deism among the students; and the Vice-Chancellor, in a *programma*, solemnly warned tutors and undergraduates against literature calculated to disturb Christian faith.

It was in this unpromising soil, teeming with High Church prejudices, deeply saturated by worldliness, and now tainted with Deism, that the seeds of Methodism were sown at Oxford.

John Wesley, its chief founder, was the son of an excellent clergyman, Samuel Wesley, Rector of Epworth, and, after passing through Charterhouse and Christ Church, had been elected Fellow of Lincoln in 1726. Having been ordained in the previous year, he acted for a while as his father's curate, and, on his return to Oxford in 1729, found his younger brother, Charles, then an undergraduate of Christ Church, already a member of a small religious association, which afterwards expanded into the Methodist communion. Of this little band John Wesley at once became the acknow-



ledged leader. Their earliest meetings were held for the purpose of reading the Greek Testament, and encouraging one another in study and good works. But within a year their sympathies widened, and they extended their charity to others. William Morgan, one of their number, visiting a condemned prisoner, was struck by the misery which he witnessed in the gaol, and persuaded the Wesleys to aid him in what may be called a prison-mission. With the consent of the Bishop of Oxford, and of his chaplain, they undertook the work of visitation, both in Bocardo, the debtors' prison, and in the county gaol. Active benevolence soon claimed even more of their energy than earnest study, which, however, they never abandoned. This handful of friends, themselves very poor, started a school for poor children, and maintained the mistress at their joint expense; assisted poor debtors, and kept their families from penury; visited the parish workhouse, relieved the sick, and in all their ministrations strove to better the spiritual condition of those whom they befriended. Nor were the undergraduates neglected. Wesley and his associates did their utmost to rescue the weaker of them from vice, and to bring them under the influence of quiet and serious companions. They encouraged them to study earnestly, and to lay out their time carefully, specially insisting on habits of close thinking; for they were intolerant of indolence, even in thought. In order to gain the confidence of his juniors, John Wesley would invite them to breakfast, and endeavour to interest them in his own efforts. To him and to his fellows, the essence of the movement was not devotional, but practical—not the propagation of a new creed, but the moral salvation of human souls.

From the first they adopted a strict code of religious observance, and made a practice of receiving the Holy Communion weekly—in that age, a rare act of religious devotion. Clayton, one of their first adherents, is said to have induced his colleagues to cultivate the habit of rigorous fasting. It was thoroughly in harmony with the self-denial and abstraction from the world already characteristic of the Society.

For instance, Wesley and his companions would sometimes break off deliberately in the middle of a sentence, when the chapel bell began to ring, that they might 'beware of the lust of finishing.' It is strange that George Whitefield, another of the early converts, should have almost fallen a victim to his ascetic enthusiasm. He confessed that he at first believed that Christianity had required him to 'go nasty'; for which reason he abstained from washing, clothed himself in evil garments, and fasted so continuously during Lent that he became unable to walk upstairs, and was compelled to submit to medical treatment. Charles Wesley, too, injured his health by excessive fasting; and John Wesley so exhausted himself, not only by fasting, but by overwork and walks of a length then almost unknown among students, that he broke a blood-vessel and was laid by for a time. The saddest case of all was that of William Morgan, whose fasting laid the foundation of an illness which developed madness, and terminated in his untimely death. This event naturally produced a sensation in the University, and was most unfairly laid at the door of John Wesley; but Morgan's father, no friend to Methodist practices, entirely exonerated Wesley, and even entrusted to him another son as a pupil.

This ascetic discipline seems to have been almost the only outward and visible peculiarity of the Society calculated to attract much attention or to provoke hostile criticism. As Mr. Overton remarks, it is 'difficult to realise the fact that, in a place especially devoted to Christian education, the mere sight of a few young men going quietly to receive the Holy Communion every Sunday at St. Mary's, their own University Church, should have attracted a crowd of ridiculing spectators,' or that piety and active benevolence should have been 'thought eccentric in a little body of men, the leader of whom was an ordained clergyman, and all of whom were intending to take Holy Orders.' But it is not so astonishing that an unsocial, if not Pharisaical, demeanour, sometimes attended with slovenliness of costume, and even with neglect of personal cleanliness, should have exposed the young reformers to some

obloquy among their companions, most of whom, no doubt, would have gained much by cultivating their acquaintance. At all events, they soon incurred a storm of juvenile ridicule. They were nicknamed Bible-moths, Supererogation-men, Sacramentarians, the Holy or the Godly Club. But the name by which they were specially known, and which has acquired a world-wide currency, was that of Methodists. This name was not of modern origin. There was an ancient society of physicians known by it, and, like the kindred name of 'precisians,' it had been applied, as Dr. Calamy informs us, to 'those who stood up for God.' It was now fastened on this little group of Oxford zealots, probably on account of the methodical rules whereby they endeavoured to regulate their behaviour and hours of work. Nor were the undergraduates their only foes. The seniors of Christ Church held a meeting to consider what could be done against them. At Lincoln College, the Rector and Fellows showed determined hostility to them: the Master of Pembroke threatened to expel Whitefield unless he gave up visiting: a brother Fellow would not oblige a Methodist by reading prayers for him in chapel, lest his obnoxious practices should be thus facilitated. Still they persevered, and persecution doubtless contributed to keep their union unbroken. Whitefield, afterwards as great a power in the Revival as Wesley himself, did not in Oxford assert his independence. As a servitor of Pembroke, he occupied too lowly a position to admit of his taking a lead in a Society which, modest as it was, consisted of Fellows, Tutors, and ordinary students. Moreover, he entered College nearly three years after the movement was initiated, and during the early part of his career knew little of its promoters, though ardently desirous of joining them. This was accomplished by an accident. He was called to the bedside of a poor man who had attempted to cut his throat, and, pitying his miserable condition, sent in haste for Charles Wesley, begging the messenger to conceal his own name. The injunction was disobeyed. Charles Wesley sought out Whitefield, asked him to breakfast, and immediately intro-

duced him to the Society. So narrow were his means, that during his three years' residence at Oxford he received but 24*l.* from his friends, supporting himself mainly on the emoluments of his servitorship and the kind presents of his tutor. There was, indeed, little wealth in the infant Methodist Church, and John Wesley himself, having fallen into debt, had been thankful to find a garret for fifty shillings a year.

But Methodism in Oxford was short-lived, and its history virtually ends with the ill-advised mission of John and Charles Wesley to Georgia in 1735. Long before this it had been manifest that, without John Wesley's personal influence, the Society must cease to flourish. During his absence in 1733 the number of communicants shrank from twenty-seven to five; and it was because he then appreciated the importance of Oxford as his special field of duty that he declined the living of Epworth. In 1738 there were but three Methodist gentlemen in the University. In the following year none visited the prison or the workhouse, and the little school was on the eve of being given up. The Oxford Methodists could not survive without the presence and example of their leader; and within three years of his departure they were virtually extinct in the city which had been at once the cradle of the movement and the stronghold of opposition to it. After his return from Georgia, in 1738, John Wesley revisited Oxford at intervals, but found himself unable to resuscitate the Methodist Society during these flying visits. The old prejudice against it, however, was still alive. In 1740, a student named Graves, being suspected of Methodism, was forced, in order to obtain his *testamur*, to sign a paper renouncing 'the modern practice and principles of the persons commonly called Methodists.' At Midsummer, 1741, John Wesley spent three weeks in Oxford, in order to inquire about the exercises for his B.D. degree, and preached a sermon, of which it was predicted by Gambold, a former associate, then unfriendly to him, that it was not worth preparing it, as there would be no audience. In 1744 he occupied the University pulpit for the last time, in spite of the authorities, who would gladly

have excluded him, if they could, from preaching in his turn. In the course of this sermon he roundly upbraided the gownsmen as a generation of triflers, and reproached the Fellows for their proverbial uselessness, pride, haughtiness of spirit, impatience, peevishness, sloth, gluttony, and sensuality. It was subsequently arranged that in future some other Fellow should preach in Wesley's place. In 1751, according to the Statutes, he resigned his Fellowship on his marriage. Six years later, Romaine, who as a student had stood aloof from Methodism, was excluded from the University pulpit for insisting upon Justification by Faith, and the imperfection of our best works. Finally, in 1768, the Vice-Chancellor expelled six Methodist students from St. Edmund Hall as disturbers of the peace; and this high-handed act was actually defended by Dr. Johnson at a time when University discipline was at its lowest—gambling, drunkenness, and blasphemy being condoned as venial offences. After this we hear no more of Methodism at Oxford. It is not hard to understand why it failed to command success there after its first conquests, since it appealed more and more to the religious enthusiasm of the less educated classes, abandoning any attempt to satisfy the speculative reason.

Thirty years before this official condemnation of Methodism at the University, it had begun to spread with marvellous rapidity over the country. John Wesley himself dated the beginning of the Revival from the spring of 1738, when he came under the influence of the Moravian, Peter Böhler, and experienced a sudden 'conversion,' which he regarded as the birth of his true spiritual life. But the energy of his nature soon caused him to rebel against the mystic 'stillness' of the Moravians, as well as the quietism of Law, his first spiritual guide, and launched him upon a career of missionary labour, which he carried on without intermission for more than half a century. The preface to his Journal records that 'he published more books, travelled more miles, and preached more sermons, than any minister of his age.' As Canon Overton tells us, 'the whole length

and breadth of England were traversed by him over and over again : he made frequent journeys into Scotland and Ireland ; and at every town and village where he stayed he was ready, in season and out of season, to preach the everlasting Gospel.' He constantly rode on horseback forty, fifty, or sixty miles a day : he found time for reading and writing on his journeys ; and he would often preach three or four times a day. It has even been calculated that, in the course of his working-life, he travelled above two hundred thousand miles, and preached some forty thousand sermons. From the first he was the life and soul of Methodism ; yet Canon Overton, defending him against the charge of despotic self-will, remarks that several of its most distinctive features were not originated by him, but adopted in deference to the opinions of others. One of these was the practice of field-preaching, initiated by Whitefield on February 17, 1739, when he delivered an open-air sermon to the colliers of Kingswood, near Bristol. Wesley felt and confessed a great repugnance to such a deviation from Church order, but soon afterwards followed Whitefield's example, though he never rivalled Whitefield's power of entrancing vast audiences. In the same year, the first separate meeting-house for Methodists was founded, also in Bristol ; and, perhaps in consequence of this, Wesley and his associates found themselves generally excluded from the pulpits of churches. The next step towards separation was taken in the following autumn, when lay-preaching was sanctioned by Wesley, though not without great reluctance. In 1743, the Rules of the Society, which still constitute its fundamental law, were drawn up, and issued with the signatures of John and Charles Wesley. In 1744, the first 'Conference' was held, and 'class-meetings' soon became a characteristic feature of Methodism. Mr. Overton, however, is unwilling to suspect the early Methodists of schismatic intentions. According to him, the class-meetings 'arose simply from the necessity of finding money to pay for what Wesley himself would have called a "preaching-house" at Bristol.' They were instituted for the purpose of a weekly collection, and

converted incidentally into gatherings for the mutual censorship of conduct. With equal charity, he endeavours to show that many other Methodist institutions—such as the ‘love-feasts,’ the ‘watch-nights,’ the ‘quarterly tickets,’ the ‘band-meetings,’ the ‘circuits,’ the offices of ‘superintendents’ and ‘circuit-stewards,’ and the ‘Conference’—grew naturally out of practical exigencies, and were not consciously devised as parts of an elaborate system designed to supplant the National Church. At all events, it is certain that, notwithstanding his disparagement of parochial discipline, Wesley remained at heart an Anglican, both in doctrine and policy. He was a stout opponent of Calvinism, he condemned the Puritan spirit of the seventeenth century, he avowed his dislike of the Presbyterian services in Scotland and his admiration of the services prescribed by the English liturgy; and, though he was not borne to his grave, like his brother Charles, by clergymen of the National Church, he always manifested, and especially in his later years, a cordial sympathy and respect for them.

Canon Overton, like Tyerman, Wesley’s latest biographer, passes rapidly over the physical manifestations, or ‘outward signs’ of the Methodist propaganda, on which Southey lays so great a stress, and which impressed contemporary observers as the most striking feature of the Revival. Now, it is important to observe that contagious paroxysms of religious excitement are by no means peculiar to Methodism, or even to Protestantism. On the contrary, Protestantism has never yet rivalled Catholicism in its power of inspiring sudden and wholesale devotion. The sweeping triumphs of Latin Christianity over the barbarian conquerors are still unparalleled, or paralleled only by the success of Xavier and his followers. Pilgrimage was the expression of an intense and universal religious impulse, and it may well be doubted whether the most powerful spiritual leaders of modern times could extort so laborious a pledge of sincerity from their disciples. The audiences of Peter the Hermit and Bernard thrilled with a more overwhelming flood of emotion than John Wesley’s

congregations at the Kingswood collieries. The cry of 'God wills it,' that burst from the great Council at Clermont, spread wider and sank deeper into the heart of Christendom than the groans which filled the early Methodist prayer-meetings. The annals of the Middle Ages are full of passionate ebullitions of religious enthusiasm, sometimes coloured by political feelings, but invariably accompanied by the two characteristic symptoms of Methodist Revivalism—affections of the nervous system, and a temporary reformation of life and manners. They recurred during the exciting epoch of the Crusades, and the camp of Walter the Penniless was probably fertile in scenes wilder than those which John Wesley complacently recorded in his Diary, and justified in his letters to his brother Samuel. Again, during the memorable years of tribulation which preceded and followed the Black Death, the emotional and spasmodic element became dominant in the religion of the day, and vented itself in three extraordinary outbreaks during the fourteenth century. Of the same nature were the panics which led to so many massacres of the Jews, and the strange popular suspicions which proved the ruin of the Templars. The Reformation cleared the atmosphere for a time; not, however, without leaving the germs of new religious disorders, belonging to a different type, and corresponding to the more spiritual character of the Reformed doctrines.

The sectarian fanaticism of the seventeenth century, extravagant as it was, owed much of its extravagance to political fanaticism. But we are fortunate in possessing, from the pen of the celebrated Jonathan Edwards, an elaborate 'Narrative of the Revival of Religion in New England' during the years 1734 and 1735, which shows that Methodist Revivalism, as the systematic propagation of a religious epidemic, had been anticipated in the American colonies. Mr. Edwards's narrative is couched in the language of the 'Pilgrim's Progress' and the Puritan divines, and is highly charged with the quaint technical phraseology of Calvinism. We read of 'legal terrors,' 'legal distresses,' 'legal humilia-



tion,' 'legal convictions,' 'legal awakenings,' 'legal humblings.' The author writes in the spirit of a physician describing the pathology of a familiar disease to a brother-professor, and displays a candour and good faith which does not shrink from recognising the boasted 'visions' as figments of the imagination. Nevertheless, his pages are darkened by a mysticism compared to which the fierce penitence of the Flagellants may appear genial and humane. In all the varieties of experience which he enumerates, we do not find that he recognises any exemption from the 'Slough of Despond.' According as they have or have not passed this, he inexorably determines the respective destinies of men. He maintains the doctrine of God's arbitrary will to have been the most salutary medicine for the times. In many of the converted he discerned 'a sort of complacency in the attribute of God's judgment as displayed in His threatenings of eternal damnation to sinners,' and adds, that 'they have sometimes almost called it a willingness to be damned.' Yet this morbid exaltation does not seem to have struck him as any evidence of mental aberration, nor did he suspect that instances of suicide and religious insanity, which he admitted, were related to Revivalism by any physical connection of cause and effect.

Probably this New England Revival is the earliest recorded precedent, within Protestant memory, for that initiated by John Wesley. It is remarkable that his sermons were far more productive of convulsions and hysterical fits than those of Whitefield, although, as Canon Overton observes, they were less sensational, and, in their published form, appear little calculated to excite sentimental frenzy. On the other hand, it is certain that, while Charles Wesley mildly condemned, and Whitefield distrusted, such proofs of instantaneous conversion, John Wesley accepted and favoured them as witnesses of the Spirit; at least, until a late period of his life. As his brother frankly said, with a large fund of common sense and administrative ability, he 'seemed born for the benefit of knaves.' He owned that, in some cases, 'nature

mixed with grace,' and 'Satan mimicked this work of God.' But he did not perceive that indulgence of the religious passions has in it something of sensuality, and that Protestant Revivalism, when it descends to a kind of jugglery in the production of moral renovation, cannot afford to cast reproach on the meretricious arts of Romanism. Wesley even declared, in deprecating the remonstrances of his brother Samuel, that he had known people converted in their sleep; but most of the instances which he mentions strongly resemble the accounts of demoniacal possession in the Gospels, the evil spirits being exorcised by prayer, and the converts relieved by a sudden access of saving faith. No wonder that Methodism was discredited in the sceptical world by these extravagances, that grave bishops and moderate Churchmen withdrew the qualified countenance which they had first given to it, and that before long the miracles of Methodist Revivalism were out-Heroded by certain foreign enthusiasts called the French Prophets, against whom John Wesley himself warned his followers. Before his death the fanatical excesses of early Methodism had already spent their strength, and a more rational tone of practical religion had supervened; but, among the communities which he founded, Revivals on a smaller scale have recurred at irregular periods, both in this country and in America. Among the latter, may be specially mentioned those of 1816, 1843, and 1857-8, when, as we are informed by a sympathetic chronicler, the crews of ships on their homeward voyages were affected by the same wave of religious emotion which was sweeping over their countrymen on shore. Another memorable Revival spread itself on both sides of the Atlantic in 1859-60, until its progress was significantly checked by the outbreak of the great American Civil War. We must not, however, allow these questionable phenomena to occupy too large a space in our general conception of Methodism. While many of its first converts insisted upon signs from Heaven, tens of thousands were led to embrace it by the force of moral conviction: its cardinal doctrines left a permanent impression on the religious world, and became

the inheritance of the great Evangelical School at the beginning of the present century.

The wonderful expansion of Methodism during the life of its founder is perhaps without precedent in religious history. In 1730, as we have seen, its only adherents were a handful of Oxford students: twelve years later, it numbered eleven hundred members in London: long before the end of the century, all Great Britain and nearly all the American colonies had rung with the eloquence of Whitefield or with the sober but hardly less effective appeals of Wesley himself: meeting-houses had sprung up in every important town, an army of missionaries was engaged in itinerating over the country, and, partly through Lady Huntingdon's influence, Methodism had found a considerable amount of acceptance even in the higher ranks of society. Franklin's testimony to the power of Whitefield's preaching is well known; but Chesterfield, Bolingbroke, and even Hume, were also among his hearers. At the time of Wesley's death, in 1791, the Methodist Church, or Connexion, as it was called, numbered above three hundred preachers in Great Britain alone, and nearly two hundred in the United States, where the success of the Revolution had made it necessary for Wesley to establish a separate organisation, under a 'superintendent,' whom, to the horror of good Churchmen, he consecrated as all but a bishop. The number of members in the United Kingdom already exceeded seventy thousand, and rose to more than one hundred thousand in the course of the next decade. Considering how carefully Wesley had weeded out backsliders and weak-kneed brethren: considering also that schism had broken out at an early stage, and detached a considerable body from the orthodox Connexion, this aggregate may be taken as representing, not merely the nominal, but the effective strength of Methodism. As it had sprung from the bosom of the Established Church, so its converts were chiefly drawn from that communion, or, at least, from a class of persons who belonged to none of the ordinary sects of Nonconformists. That it gave a powerful impulse to Dissent, in spite of Wesley's personal attachment

to the Church, may be inferred from the fact 'that, whereas at George I.'s death the proportion of Dissenters to Churchmen was about one to twenty-five, by 1800 it was computed to be one to four.' On the other hand, its indirect effect in stimulating zeal within the Church itself was undoubtedly great. Though neither Sunday Schools, nor Foreign Missions, nor the Abolition of the Slave Trade, can be claimed among the results of Methodism—indeed, Whitefield himself was a slave-owner—all these movements owed much to the religious and benevolent spirit kindled by Methodism, as well as by the more constant influence of the Evangelical School.

The short chapter in which Canon Overton shows the affinity and the contrast between Methodism and so-called Evangelicalism is one of the most interesting in the volume. It would be a great delusion to imagine that 'Evangelical' religion, as now understood, was invented or first developed by the apostles of Methodism. Not to speak of the great Puritan divines, or of such American writers as Jonathan Edwards, there had never been wanting in the Church of England a succession of pious and sober-minded clergymen holding the same views as were afterwards connected with the names of Wilberforce and the Clapham School. Both Methodists and Evangelical Churchmen 'aimed at reviving spiritual religion; they both so far resembled the Puritanism of the seventeenth century in that they contended for the immediate and particular influence of the Holy Spirit, for the total degeneracy of man, for the vicarious nature of the Atonement, for the absolute unlawfulness of certain kinds of amusement, for the strict observance of the Lord's Day or Sabbath (for they used the words indiscriminately); and they both agreed in differing from Puritanism, by taking either no side in politics at all, or else taking the opposite side from that which the Puritans would have taken, by disclaiming sympathy with Dissenters or Nonconformists, by glorying in the fact that they were members of the Church of England (Methodists no less than Evangelicals), and by the most staunch loyalty to the Throne.' The distinctions between them con-

sisted mainly in the differences of spirit and mode of working. The Methodists were restless and impulsive, the Evangelicals valued moderation and self-restraint: the Methodists drew their converts from the lower and lower-middle classes, 'the backbone of Evangelicalism was in the upper and upper-middle classes': the Methodists adopted an elaborate organisation of 'societies,' in lieu of the parochial system, to which the Evangelicals adhered. But there were many connecting links between the two, and many excellent clergymen whom it would be difficult to assign exclusively to either camp. Such were James Hervey, William Romaine, John Newton (the friend of Cowper), Thomas Scott, Richard Cecil, the two Milners, Walker of Truro, and Fletcher of Madeley, who, though closely identified with Methodism, were thoroughly attached to parochial work, and refused to be diverted from it. These men, with others, to whom Canon Overton devotes short notices, were only not Methodists because they were satisfied to labour for the good of souls within the sphere traced for them by the Church of England, and would assuredly have kept alive Evangelical religion in the country, even if Wesley and Whitefield had never existed.

As we review the work of the Evangelical Revival of the last century, we cannot but recognise in it a noble expression of individual piety, and a powerful instrument for the purification of national character. The Christian life has seldom been seen in greater perfection, or missionary enthusiasm in a manlier form, than among the apostles of Methodism, with their Evangelical precursors and successors in the Church of England itself. They may have been inferior in mental stature to the greatest of the Puritan leaders, and in scholarly culture to the pioneers of the Tractarian movement. They knew little of Biblical criticism, and never dreamed of the influence to be exercised by modern science on theology: many articles of their dogmatic creed will not bear the scrutiny of a later philosophy: their popular discourses were too highly charged with appeals to mere religious emotion: their domestic controversies were sometimes carried on with an

acrimony unworthy of their professions. But in personal holiness, in self-denial, and in single-minded devotion to Christian duty, as exemplified by Christ and His Apostles, they rose as far above the ordinary moral standard of their age as they sank below its highest intellectual aspirations. Theirs was no barren faith: it constantly bore fruit in good works, and its unseen operation was felt in that practical spirit of philanthropy which stirred the heart of England, while the dreams of Rousseau were plunging France into anarchy, in the latter part of the eighteenth century. This is a debt which the nation owes to Wesley and his Evangelical contemporaries, but which has never been fully acknowledged. It was they who laboured most abundantly among the Christian ministers of their day to associate religion with humanity, making it a true bond of sympathy between classes, teaching rich men to regard the poor as their brothers in Christ, and poor men to console themselves with a hope beyond the grave, welcoming into their fellowship the very outcasts of society as the chosen objects of Divine mercy; and thus insensibly combating those perilous counsels of revenge and despair which possessed the minds of the French peasantry at the same epoch, and culminated in the French Revolution.

*OXFORD IN THE MIDDLE AGES*<sup>1</sup>

Two centuries have elapsed since the publication of Anthony Wood's 'History and Antiquities of the University of Oxford,' yet no serious attempt has been made until now to improve upon that wonderful, but cumbrous and singularly ill-arranged, compilation of precious materials. More than one modern antiquary has essayed to complete it by annotations or continuations; but nearly all subsequent historians have been content to quote it as an original authority, and Mr. Maxwell Lyte is the first who has ventured to go behind Anthony Wood, in the spirit of modern criticism,<sup>2</sup> by ransacking the manuscripts of Bryan Twyne, and other unpublished documents in the Record Office and the great public libraries. The result is a handsome volume of the highest value and interest, which, however, must be regarded as an historical torso, since it concludes with the death of Cardinal Wolsey. In fact, Mr. Maxwell Lyte's History, in its present form, would be more properly entitled a History of the University in the Middle Ages, and we must still have recourse to Anthony Wood for the more eventful periods of the Reformation and the Civil Wars, in which the University played a foremost part. But a cursory glance at Mr. Lyte's table of contents is sufficient to show that a History of the University in the

<sup>1</sup> A review of 'A History of the University of Oxford, from the Earliest Times to the Year 1530,' by H. Maxwell Lyte, M.A., Deputy Keeper of the Public Records. London. 1886. Reprinted from 'Macmillan's Magazine.'

<sup>2</sup> A curious proof of Anthony Wood's almost mechanical accuracy is afforded by an entry in the 'Fasti Oxon.' stating that John Favonr, of New College, graduated as LL.B. on April 31, 1585; which impossible date turns out to be textually copied from the original record.

Middle Ages is no dry record of merely academical transactions. On the contrary, as he truly observes, the early clerks of Oxford were anything but 'a body of sequestered students, intent only upon the advancement of learning.' They were a struggling and militant society, constantly in conflict with external authorities claiming spiritual or civil jurisdiction over them: swayed by every current of popular opinion: waging an eternal warfare against the townsmen among whom they lived; and distracted among themselves by feuds of race, language, political sentiment, and philosophical or theological conviction. The well-known distich which describes Oxford as the hotbed of national strife was amply justified by the facts; and Mr. Lyte's readers are fully rewarded for their patience in mastering the details of the mediæval curriculum by narratives of disorderly outbreaks which make us marvel how, in so turbulent an atmosphere, quiet study could be carried on at all.

It is not very easy to understand why the author should have reserved for his ninth chapter an exhaustive examination of the myth which assigned the foundation of the University, and even of University College, to Alfred the Great. Suffice it to say that not a shred of real historical evidence can be produced in support of it. The passage which deceived Camden, and was imported by him into Asser's 'Life of King Alfred,' is now generally rejected as a forgery, dating, at earliest, from the reign of Richard II. Other records, alleging an equally ancient origin, are now believed to be of an equally recent date; and University College is more than suspected of having fabricated the whole story, for its own purposes, at the end of the fourteenth century. The Schools of Oxford, out of which the University afterwards developed itself, cannot be traced back with certainty to a period beyond the reign of Henry I. Indeed, one of Mr. Lyte's critics regards Giraldus Cambrensis's account of his visit in 1186 as the first historical mention of them. But the authentic history of the City in which these Schools grew up begins at least two centuries earlier, and was so important during the age imme-



diately preceding the Norman Conquest as to deserve a fuller notice than Mr. Lyte awards to it.

Old as it is by comparison with the University, the City of Oxford is new by comparison with London and other seats of Roman colonies in Britain, or even with the older settlements of Saxons. Its situation on a low ridge of gravelly soil between the Cherwell and the Thames, protected by a network of watercourses on every side but the north, might well have recommended it for a station of the Roman legions, yet there is no record of its having been inhabited for centuries after the Saxon Conquest. A few traces of British occupation, as well as the remains of Roman villas, have been found in the neighbourhood, but not on the actual site, of Oxford: the Roman road from Dorchester to Bicester passes near, but not through, it; and in the long struggles between the kingdoms of Mercia and Wessex, no siege of Oxford, or battle for the possession of it, is recorded among the incidents of any campaign. It is an equally significant fact that we hear nothing of Oxford in connection with the Abbey of Dorchester, but nine miles distant, where St. Birinus is stated to have established his see in 624, as the first Bishop of the West Saxons.

The unwritten history of Oxford, indeed, really begins with the foundation of St. Frideswide's Nunnery in the eighth century, on the site now occupied by Christ Church; for the fact of this foundation in 727, or soon afterwards, admits of no reasonable doubt, whatever legends may have since obscured it. At this period Oxford, which had once been enclosed within the Mercian dominions as they encroached southward on Wessex, had again become a border-town of Mercia. This position it finally lost when Egbert, who succeeded, in the year 800, extended his rule over all England. The alleged establishment of a mint at Oxford by King Alfred rests on the existence of coins with the inscription *Orsnaforda*, or *Oksnaforda*, the interpretation of which has of late been gravely disputed. The first undoubted mention of the City in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is under the date 912. 'This year,' says the chronicler, 'died Æthered, ealdorman of the

Mercians, and King Eadward took possession of London, and of Oxford, and of all the lands which owed obedience thereto.' It is evident that Oxford already ranked as a place of some importance, since King Edward the Elder thus separated it from the province of Mercia, ruled by his sister, widow of Æthered, and brought it, with London, under his own immediate dominion. It is probable, but not certain, that its natural defences were strengthened during this century by the remarkable conical mound known as the Castle Hill, to guard it against incursions of the Danes moving up the river, 'the great border-stream of Wessex and Mercia.' It seems to have been the first town erected on the Thames above London, and must have increased in importance when London and the Lower Thames valley were lost to England in the Danish Wars. There are some reasons for conjecturing that it had actually fallen into the hands of the Danes in the raids which preceded the peace of Wedmore (878), and was then restored. At all events, it appears to have been a fortified place before the end, if not at the beginning, of the tenth century, and to have become the capital of a shire, incorporated into the kingdom of Wessex, already on the eve of embracing the whole kingdom of England.

It was at Oxford, and probably within the precincts of its Castle, that Ælfward, son of King Edward, died in 924, very soon after his father. Oxford, however, can scarcely have been a town of the first dignity, if it be true that a National Gemot or Council was held, not there, but at Kirtlington, eight or nine miles distant, in 977, the King and Archbishop Dunstan being present; and that, when the Bishop of Crediton suddenly died there, his body was conveyed, not to St. Frideswide's, but to St. Mary's at Abingdon. At the opening of the next century, however (1002), it was forced into an infamous notoriety by the massacre of Danes perpetrated there by King Ethelred's order on St. Brice's day. In the course of this massacre, which is known to us through a charter of King Ethelred himself, the unfortunate Danes took refuge in the tower, or church of St. Frideswide's; but the

people set fire to the wooden roof, and they were all burned with the sacred edifice. It is hardly surprising to hear that, seven years later (1009), the victorious Danes, having marched through the Chiltern Woods, sacked and burned Oxford, returning to their ships. They visited the country again in the following year; and in 1013 King Sweyn imposed 'his law' on the men of Oxford and Winchester—towns which, in this century, are mentioned as almost in the same rank with London.

In 1015 Oxford again became the meeting-place of a National Gemot, and the scene of another treacherous murder. As the English Chronicle informs us in its simple language, 'there the Ealdorman Eadric insnared Sigeferth and Morkere, the chief thanes in the Seven Burghs. He enticed them into his chamber, and therein they were foully slain. And the King then took all their possessions, and ordered Sigeferth's widow to be taken, and brought to Malmesbury.' In the following year Ethelred died, and was succeeded by his son Edmund Ironside, who had seized the widow of Sigeferth and made her his wife. After a short but stormy reign of a few months only, Edmund suddenly died on his way back from Gloucester to London. According to Henry of Huntingdon, he was assassinated at Oxford by order of the same traitor, Eadric, who had in the meantime submitted to Canute. Two years after his accession (1018), Canute also held a Gemot at Oxford, where 'the Danes and Angles were unanimous for Eadgar's' (that is, for English) 'law.' In Oxford, therefore, and doubtless within the precincts of Oxford Castle, were enacted several tragical incidents of the Danish invasion, as well as the solemn acceptance of English law, though under a Danish ruler. Eighteen years later, on the death of Canute, in 1036, another great National Gemot was held at Oxford, and elected Harold Harefoot, under the influence of Northern thanes and Londoners, opposed by Earl Godwine, who, however, secured the dominion of Wessex for Harthacanute. In 1039, or 1040, Harold Harefoot died at Oxford. Nothing is heard of the City during the next twenty-six years, except that its tolls

were regulated by law under Edward the Confessor, and that Earl Harold, afterwards king, passed through it on an expedition into Wales. In 1065, however, it once more becomes memorable, as the place selected for the famous Gemot at which Tostig, Harold's brother, was outlawed. Morecar was made Earl of Northumberland, and the Danish law was actually re-enacted, apparently at the instance of powerful nobles, representing the Danish section of England, whom Harold resolved to conciliate, against the wish of the King.

Considering the space which Oxford fills in the history of the eleventh century, it is remarkable that it should have played no important part in the great drama of the Norman Conquest. It has been alleged, indeed, that it was besieged and half-demolished by William the Conqueror; but there is no trustworthy evidence of such a siege, or of William having even approached so near to Oxford as Wallingford—the point at which he is traditionally reported to have crossed the Thames. What is certain is, that in 1071 the Castle of Oxford was either built, or rebuilt on Saxon foundations, by Robert D'Oilgi. This Baron is also reported to have built the churches of St. George in the Castle, and St. Michael at the North Gate, as well as that of St. Mary Magdalen and St. Peter in the East, besides repairing other parish churches. He was also the reputed builder of the original Hythe Bridge, which probably formed the only western approach to the City.

By far the most authentic description of Oxford under the Conqueror is to be found in Domesday Book, which, however, makes no reference to churches or other public buildings. In this unique record Oxford, 'as well within the wall as without,' is stated to have contained '243 houses paying geld, and 478 so waste and destroyed that they cannot pay the geld.' Much stress has been laid on this last statement, as supporting the story of a recent siege; but it has been explained, with greater probability, as the result of devastation committed by the rebel mob of the North, headed by Edwin and Morecar, who had broken up the Gemot at Northampton

in 1085, and ravaged the country as far as Oxford, where it was ultimately held. At all events, we find but 243 houses paying 'geld,' some of which are described as *vastæ*; and the whole population of Oxford at that period has been estimated, upon a review of the data afforded by Domesday Book, as not exceeding one thousand. A large proportion of the registered houses or 'mansions' are styled 'mural,' because held subject to an obligation to repair the wall—perhaps no more than an earthen rampart. Twenty-five of the mansions belonged to the King: sixty-nine to the Archbishop and five Bishops, among whom the Bishop of Lincoln was by far the largest proprietor: twenty-eight to the Abbeys of Bury St. Edmunds, Abingdon, and Eglesham: ninety-five to Robert D'Oilgi and eighteen other nobles of various degrees: eighteen to priests and canons in Oxford; and sixty-two to Oxford burgesses or other private owners. Not the slightest allusion is made to an University, or even to Schools. It is easy to fill up this picture with graphic details of the petty Oxford community, trafficking at markets and fairs, assessing its annual contribution of 60*l.* to the royal treasury at periodical town-meetings, and holding courts or motes for various purposes, one of which retained from an earlier age the singular name of *Portmannimot*. But all such details must needs be imaginary in the absence of contemporary records; and it is not even certain whether the City then contained only eight, or as many as fifteen churches and chapels, or whether it had been mapped out into parishes. There can be no doubt, however, that in Port-Meadow, still the common pasture of the Oxford freemen, we have a genuine survival of pre-Norman times; or that in the Sheriff of the City we have, under a misleading name, a true representative of the ancient Port-reeve, whose business it was, as it still is, to watch over this municipal domain.

The later history of the mediæval City is almost merged in that of the University, and a large part of Mr. Lyte's volume is devoted to an account of the incessant and almost internecine struggles between the clerks and the townsmen.

The late Mr. J. R. Green, himself a native of Oxford, condemned the mediæval University, in no measured terms, as having crushed the liberties of the City. It is no less true, however, that the City owed its prosperity and renown, though not its existence, to its academical population; and that, when the strife between the rival communities was at its height, the most powerful weapon of the University was the threat of removal to some other provincial town. This threat was partially carried out on more than one occasion. In 1209, and again in 1239, there were secessions of discontented Oxonians to Paris, Reading, and Cambridge. Soon after the famous Parliament of Oxford in 1258, there arose a desperate conflict, in which the clerks seem to have been most to blame. The King withdrew his protection from them; and a large body of Oxford scholars migrated to Northampton, whither many refugees from Cambridge had already betaken themselves in consequence of a similar riot. They afterwards took an active part in defending Northampton against the Royal forces, but ultimately returned to Oxford in 1264 or 1265, in deference to orders issued by Simon de Montford in the King's name. So familiar was the idea of migration from Oxford, that Walter de Merton, in founding the first Oxford College, expressly authorised its scholars to settle, if necessary, at some other place of general education. The murderous affrays of 1279 and 1354, which are graphically depicted by Mr. Lyte, were followed by a temporary suspension of lectures and dispersion of students, few of whom, however, appear to have settled elsewhere. The memorable secession to Stamford, in 1334, was chiefly the result of violent feuds between the northern and southern 'nations' within the University itself; and the memory of it was preserved in an oath against attending lectures at Stamford, which, up to the year 1827, was administered to all candidates for a degree.

In the meantime, the chronic disputes between the University and City had assumed so aggravated a form as frequently to call for royal intervention. The very earliest

document preserved in the University archives records the punishment of certain Oxford townspeople who had arrested and hanged three clerks. But the most compendious statement of the grievances alleged by the citizens is to be found in a Royal award (scarcely noticed by Mr. Lyte) made by Edward I. in 1290, which embodies certain articles of peace then concluded between the parties. It begins with a mutual renunciation of all past claims up to the date of the appeal, and a promise on the part of the Mayor and Burgesses to respect in future all the rights and privileges of the University under their Charter, which, however, they allege to have been grievously strained. Their first complaint is that the Chancellor of his own authority sets free prisoners who have been lawfully arrested by the Aldermen and Bailiffs, and cites the latter to appear before himself. To this complaint the King replies by conceding this authority to the Chancellor where one of the parties to a quarrel is a clerk, except in cases of homicide, or 'mayhem,' and enjoins the Mayor to seek redress for any abuse of such jurisdiction in the King's Courts. The next complaint is that the Chancellor appropriates to himself victuals forfeited under the statutes against forestalling and regrating: of which the King disposes by giving a concurrent jurisdiction to the Chancellor and the Mayor, with a provision that victuals so forfeited shall be given to the Hospital of St. John. A third complaint is that the Chancellor imposes exorbitant fines and recognisances on laymen (townspeople) imprisoned for trespasses against clerks, as the condition of their liberation: a practice which the King censures, ordering him to exact only reasonable sums in future. A fourth complaint is that, whereas the Bailiffs of the City are bound, under the University Charter, to be sworn before the Chancellor in some 'common place,' they are compelled by the University to take the oath in St. Mary's Church, with no saving clause for their allegiance to the Crown, and with an additional clause precluding them from recourse to the King's Courts. This usurpation, as might be expected, is absolutely condemned and prohibited by the King.

The fifth complaint is of the same nature as the second, but relates to the forfeiture of unsound meat or fish, and is decided in the same way, by assigning the forfeited victuals to the Hospital of St. John. The sixth complaint is that the 'chartered privilege of the University' in respect of jurisdiction, which properly belongs only to scholars, is unduly extended so as to embrace tailors, barbers, writers, parchment-makers, and others, with their families. This point seems to have been settled by agreement, without the King's intervention, by defining the University privilege as including clerks and their families, with servants and tradespeople, even of the classes specified, if immediately engaged in waiting upon clerks. The seventh complaint is that the University will not allow townspeople to let their houses to scholars for a term of less than ten years. This limitation is annulled for the future by the King, who, however, forbids any collusion whereby scholars may be turned out of houses tenanted by them, or rents may be raised against them. The eighth complaint is that townspeople are summoned before the Chancellor at unreasonable times without due notice: in response to which the King requires one day's notice to be given in ordinary cases, but allows summary citations for violations of the peace. The ninth complaint is that, at the suit of clerks, the Chancellor deprives soldiers and other strangers passing through Oxford of their riding-gear and trappings to make satisfaction for debts contracted elsewhere. This arbitrary power is restricted by the King to debts contracted in Oxford. The tenth complaint is that, when a layman is desperately wounded by a clerk, the Chancellor demands the person of the clerk to be surrendered to him, before it is known whether the sufferer be wounded to death. On this point the Chancellor is covertly rebuked by the King, and sternly enjoined to desist from the rescue of clerks in such cases. The last complaint is that the University insists upon houses rented by scholars being valued every five, instead of every seven, years: which complaint the King overrules, declaring five years to be the period contemplated in the Charter. This



complaint, like the seventh, is, of course, a protest against the ancient claim of the University to something like fixity of rent, if not of tenure, for houses in the occupation of scholars: a claim which proved the fertile source of innumerable quarrels.

The frequent reference in this award to the Chancellor and Charter of the University opens out a long vista of anti-quarian controversy, which runs through almost every chapter of Mr. Lyte's history. The unlearned reader, however, may be content to believe that, after all, 'the University of Oxford did not spring into being in any particular year, or at the bidding of any particular founder: it was not established by any formal charter of incorporation. Taking its rise in a small and obscure association of teachers and learners, it developed spontaneously into a large and important body, long before its existence was recognised by prince or by prelate.' In the earliest writs and documents relating to its privileges it is recognised as an existing institution; but perhaps the decree issued by Henry III. in 1244 may deserve to be called 'the Magna Charta of the University,' since it definitely 'created a special tribunal for the benefit of students, and invested the Chancellor with a jurisdiction which no legate or bishop could confer, and which no civil judge could annul.' The origin of the Chancellor's office is enveloped in much obscurity; but he is clearly described, in a letter of the Papal Legate, dated 1214, as the nominee of the Bishop of Lincoln, whose vast diocese then embraced Oxford. It does not follow that even then he was not elected by the University Convocation; and it is certain that soon afterwards he was so elected, though his election long continued to be subject to confirmation by the diocesan. Probably his gradual absorption into the academic body was facilitated by the fact that, unlike the Chancellor at Paris, he was not a member of a Cathedral Chapter, or living under the eye of a resident bishop. At all events, by the middle of the thirteenth century he was treated as an independent representative of the University, while the Archdeacon of Oxford was the official

deputy of the Bishop. A century later he was given full jurisdiction, by the Pope himself, over all members of the University, religious and lay, to the exclusion of the Archdeacon; and it was solemnly ordained that his election by the University itself should be sufficient, without the confirmation of the diocesan.

Mr. Lyte observes a judicious reticence on the rise and growth of the Proctorial authority. Proctors are associated with the Chancellor, as delegates of the University, in letters-patent of 1248; but it does not appear what their original functions were, or how they were appointed. Anthony Wood tells us that, in 1343, the University agreed that one Proctor should always be a Northerner, and the other a Southerner, for the purpose of scrutinising the votes at elections of the Chancellor. On the other hand, at the University of Paris the Proctors specially represented from the very first the four 'nations' into which the Faculty of Arts was divided, the Deans being the chosen officers of the Faculties as such. Considering that the University of Paris was the elder sister, at least, if not the mother, of the English university, this analogy raises a strong presumption in favour of the Proctors being at first representatives of the two nations into which the Oxford 'Artists' were divided. Such a presumption derives some confirmation from an expression found in a letter of Adam Marsh, written in 1253, where '*duo Rectores pro Artistis*' are mentioned as subscribing a statute against the Friars. Mr. Lyte identifies these two Rectors with the Proctors, and at Cambridge the phrase '*Rectores sive Proctores*' was common in the Middle Ages. But, as Proctors are specifically named in an University Ordinance of about the middle of the thirteenth century, it is perhaps safer to regard them generally as officers elected by the whole body of graduates, filling a place not unlike that of the Rector at other Universities, but more particularly charged with the financial duties of stewards and collectors. The importance attached to such duties, as compared with the highest objects of education and learning, is a distinctive feature of Academic

statutes in the Middle Ages. Like the primitive Church, the primitive University was essentially a society of men struggling for their livelihood; and the great movements of thought which agitated Oxford in the age of the Schoolmen and of Wyclif left fainter traces in University legislation than squabbles with the City over pecuniary rights, and conflicts between the secular and regular clergy, in which material interests were very largely involved.

These conflicts, indeed, engrossed much of the internal life, and wasted much of the energy, of the University during the whole period of the Middle Ages. Probably the claustral schools of the Benedictines were the cradle of Academical study; but the University had already outgrown its infancy, and had developed a vigorous secular teaching before the establishment of the Mendicant Friars at Oxford in the early part of the thirteenth century. During the remainder of that century, these Orders, encouraged by the great Robert Grosseteste, supplied the University with its most eminent lecturers; and it is the special glory of the Franciscans to have produced in the same age Adam Marsh and Roger Bacon. But the secular clerks soon became jealous of the Friars, partly because they sought to obtain degrees in theology without satisfying the requirements of the Arts Faculty, which at Oxford, no less than at Paris, claimed a paramount ascendancy; and partly because they were constantly decoying young students into the assumption of monastic vows. Merton, the first of Oxford Colleges, was expressly founded by a Bishop of Rochester as a seminary for the secular clergy, and no 'religious' person could be admitted to its benefits. The same policy was adopted by almost all the other founders of Colleges, and the gradual rise of Colleges marked the downfall of monastic influence. Mr. Lyte seems to have undervalued the importance of Colleges in the mediæval University, when he says that they did not become predominant until near the end of the fifteenth century. No doubt it was not until 1432 that 'chamber-dekyns,' or non-collegiate students, were formally abolished by statute, and for many years afterwards a majority of students may have been

lodged in Halls rather than in Colleges. But it is certain that even in the fourteenth century, when the number of Colleges rose from three only to seven, they were already the dominant element in the University. Out of about sixty-eight Proctors who are known to have held office in that century, all but eighteen were entered as members of a College; and it is highly probable that in several of these eighteen cases the name of the College was accidentally omitted. The proportion of Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors (or Commissaries) known to have been members of Colleges is much smaller in the earlier part of the century, but very considerable in the later part. Mr. Lyte himself, with a happy inconsistency, dwells at great length on the history of each collegiate foundation, and furnishes elaborate extracts of their statutes, which are by no means the least readable or instructive part of his work.

Few readers will care to master the chapters which deal in detail with the organisation of studies and disputations in the University of the Schoolmen. Those who are familiar with the restless multiplication and amendment of examination-statutes in modern Oxford will be slow to believe in the existence at any one time of a symmetrical or uniform working-system, and will readily surmise that various arrangements for lectures and degrees, commonly described as successive, were really in simultaneous operation. The broad features of the mediæval curriculum may, however, be concisely stated. Neither the University nor the Colleges enforced any entrance-examination; and Freshmen had to undergo a preliminary training in grammar, then regarded as the basis of all knowledge. The subsequent course of instruction was mainly logical. But it is material to observe that, in that age, logic, in common with most of the other 'Arts,' represented an accomplishment deemed to be useful. It was not only as an intellectual discipline, but as giving the power of reading and writing Latin, that grammar was assiduously taught. It was as instruments of controversy and persuasion that logic and rhetoric were cultivated. It was

chiefly for the sake of practical astronomy, closely allied to astrology, that mathematical lore was valued. Logic derived an additional advantage from its supplying the method by which proficiency in all other studies was tested, and the mediæval disputations were the prototype of modern examinations. Little or no attention was given to scholarship, in the ordinary sense, to literary culture, or to the acquisition of useful knowledge. The grand aim of education was to sharpen the logical powers, and so to prepare the mind for instruction in the higher professional Faculties—law, medicine, and, above all, theology—which mediæval thinkers agreed in recognising as the crown of all the sciences. The ‘three philosophies’—natural, moral, and metaphysical—were mainly reserved for the interval of three years between ‘determination,’ which qualified a student for the degree of Bachelor, and ‘inception,’ which constituted him a Master, and conferred on him the lucrative privilege of teaching.

This system, if such it can be called, was finally overthrown by the Reformation; but it was undermined by the Renaissance, which made itself felt at Oxford earlier than is usually supposed. Mr. Lyte connects this movement with the return of the Papal Court to Rome after the Great Schism, and his description of it, though somewhat too biographical, is extremely interesting. It may be true, as he says, that ‘no attempt was made in England to revive the study of classical literature before the reign of Henry VII.’ But Mr. Lyte himself mentions five more or less eminent students from Oxford who attended the lectures of Guarino at Ferrara in the first half of the fifteenth century, and became collectors of classical books.

The effect of the Renaissance in modifying the studies of Oxford may be illustrated by a comparison between the contents of College libraries at the end of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries respectively. A very interesting catalogue of the Oriel College Library in the year 1375 has lately been published. From this it appears to have consisted almost entirely of manuals on grammar, logic, philosophy, theology,

and law, both canon and civil—the studies cultivated in the various Faculties. Translations of Aristotle, copies of the Digest and the Code, works of Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus, treatises of Augustine, Gregory, and other standard divines, with a Bible, and a Latin edition of Euclid, make up the staple of this collection. Literature is conspicuous by its absence, and the Classics are represented by ‘Macrobius de sompno Scipionis.’ There is, unhappily, no record of the books contributed by William Rede and Simon Bredon to form the Merton Library about the year 1376; but the few books which are specifically named among the many said to have been presented by Fellows of Merton during the same period are of an exactly similar character. On the other hand, a catalogue of Lincoln College Library, compiled about 1474, or a century later, includes a large number of the Latin Classics, such as Virgil, Cicero, Livy, Terence, Plautus, Horace, and Juvenal. The University Register shows that, so far back as 1448, the Georgics of Virgil were the subject of University lectures; and in the catalogues of books given to the University by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, in 1439 and 1443, we find, among tomes of scholastic lore, Cicero’s Orations and Epistles, Livy, Suetonius, Ovid, Pliny, Terence, and an oration of Æschines, with Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch. The University system of disputations and examinations was still based on the old learning, but the new learning had already penetrated into the libraries. It was soon to receive an impulse from the efforts of Erasmus and his fellow-labourers, which, after a brief reaction, ultimately secured for Latin and Greek scholarship a supremacy in Oxford education as complete as that once held by scholastic logic, until it was once more challenged by the progress of philosophy, history, and natural science.

Though rich in illustrations of mediæval life and manners, the history of the University before the Reformation has few points of contact with the great political events of that romantic period. The clerks of Oxford were not concerned with the escape of Matilda from Oxford Castle, or with the

two Councils held there by Stephen, or with the Parliament of 1258, which gave its name to the Provisions of Oxford, or with the frequent residence of the Court at Woodstock. The Barons' War of the thirteenth century, the Scotch and French Wars of the next two centuries, the Peasants' Revolt, with its sequel in the insurrection of Jack Cade, the Wars of the Roses, and the constitutional reaction under the Tudors, left no trace on academical life, and scarcely find a record in Academical annals. The great and direct influence which the University was destined to exercise on the State Church in the sixteenth, and on the State itself in the seventeenth century, was as yet undeveloped and unrealised. But the depth and extent of its influence upon the world of thought and belief can hardly be overestimated. There were trained most of the great ecclesiastics who became, not only the prelates, but the Chancellors and statesmen, of the Middle Ages. There natural science found its earliest apostle in Roger Bacon, and scholastic philosophy two of its profoundest exponents in Duns Scotus and Bradwardine. There William of Ockham is believed to have raised the standard of revolt against Papal authority in matters of faith, and to have proclaimed the severance of logic from theology. There John Wyclif (to whose career Mr. Lyte devotes an admirable chapter) assuredly became the pioneer of the Lollard movement, and anticipated by four generations several of the doctrines afterwards preached by Luther. The ignorant statement of Huber, that 'Oxford was nowhere to be found in the great Church Councils of the fifteenth century,' is almost the reverse of the fact. True it is that it no longer eclipsed Paris, as it had in the golden age before the great pestilence, and that its part in ecclesiastical affairs was secondary to that played by the leading University of Western Christendom. But it steadily and successfully resisted the scheme proposed by the University of Paris for ending the Great Schism, insisting that a General Council must be summoned. This General Council, which met at Pisa in 1409, deposed both the rival Popes, and procured the election of a Friar who had taken a Bachelor

of Divinity's degree at Oxford. At the Council of Constance, held in 1414, the University of Oxford was ably represented; and Henry of Abingdon, afterwards Warden of Merton, produced a great impression by his sermon advocating a reformation of the Church. The University was specially invited to appear by its delegates at the Council of Basle in 1431; and though it was reduced to solicit contributions towards the expense of the mission, it found a worthy representative in John Kemp, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. Poor as it was, it maintained a small public library when such institutions were still unknown in Italy, which, enriched by the noble benefaction of Duke Humphrey, was among the marvels of the age before the invention of printing. If Oxford was not the place at which this momentous invention was first adopted in England, it certainly possessed one of the very earliest presses, from which issued the first classical book printed in England—a significant emblem of the coming Renaissance, in which the University took so leading a part. Two conclusive proofs of the position occupied by the University at the beginning of the sixteenth century are the superb projects of Cardinal Wolsey for organising there a propaganda of 'the new literature in the service of the old Church'; and the unscrupulous efforts of Henry VIII. to obtain decrees from the Oxford Convocation in favour of the Divorce and the Royal Supremacy.

But we are here on the confines of the Reformation-period, and almost beyond the border-line of the Middle Ages, which embrace the infancy and youth of the University. Henceforth its political and social importance was to increase, and a more conspicuous place was reserved for it in the general history of England. But its original character was to be changed. It was no longer to share with Cambridge an almost exclusive monopoly of English education in all its departments, from the highest realms of philosophical speculation to the simplest rudiments of grammar. It was no longer to be the *schola secunda ecclesiæ* in Europe; and the intellectual centre of gravity in England was inevitably to



be shifted to the commercial and political centre of the kingdom, in the Metropolis itself. In the ampler and brighter day now dawning upon the nation, the light of scholastic learning, so long kept alive at Oxford, could not fail to wax pale and dim. In becoming secularised, the University forfeited that unique prestige which it derived from the transcendent authority of the mediæval Church. It was still to become a great power in the State, and to educate a long succession of scholars and gentleman for service in Parliament, in the sacred ministry, and in the learned professions. But its empire over the national mind was no longer to be so far-reaching, and its place in the national life was never again to be so imposing, as it had been in the Middle Ages.

*THE PLACE OF OXFORD UNIVERSITY IN  
ENGLISH HISTORY*

*Three Lectures delivered at the Royal Institution of Great Britain  
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I

THE University of Oxford first emerges into history at the close of the twelfth century. Whether its origin is to be sought in the monastic seminaries of St. Frideswide's and Oseney, or in a migration from the University of Paris; and whether or not we believe that Robert Pullus lectured on Theology in 1133, and Vacarius on Roman law in 1149, the Schools of Oxford had evidently not acquired the character of an University until the reign of Henry II., and did not acquire the name of an University until the following century. The most sceptical of modern critics admit the truth of the positive statement, made by Giraldus Cambrensis, that he publicly read at Oxford his work on the Topography of Ireland in the year 1186 or 1187. If we can trust his further assertion, that the most learned and famous of the English clergy were then to be found at Oxford, and if 'the doctors of the different faculties,' whom he professes to have feasted, were actually possessors of regular degrees, we must believe the Academical system to have reached a considerable maturity long before popes or kings took cognisance of it.

In such an age, it is true, such an institution as the infant University could never have organised itself permanently without active encouragement from the Crown, as well as from the Church. At the same time, its early growth appears to have been essentially spontaneous, and far more indepen-

dent than we might have expected, both of ecclesiastical control and of Royal patronage. The 'Schools of Oxford,' which ultimately became incorporated into 'The University of Oxford,' were not claustral but secular, and centred in a particular quarter of the city, removed from the great religious houses. The lecturers were, doubtless, 'clerks,' in the mediæval sense, but mostly private adventurers, owing allegiance to no monastic superior. There was no resident Bishop of Oxford, and no Chancellor of an Oxford Cathedral, under whose superintendency they could be directly placed, like their brethren in the University of Paris. The one paramount authority which they recognised was that of their diocesan, the Bishop of Lincoln; but he lived at a safe distance, and the Archdeacon of Oxford was the highest resident functionary of the Church. Still less were the 'Schools of Oxford' overshadowed, like those of Paris, by the feudal and official hierarchy of a great metropolis. The authorities of the Academical body had, practically, no competitors but the authorities of the City, which received its first charter just before the first official recognition of the Oxford clerks as a privileged society, under the special protection of the Pope. This was occasioned by a murderous outrage of the townspeople on the students, which occurred in 1209. Five years later the Papal Legate, in relieving the City from an interdict—the penalty of this outrage—placed the scholars expressly under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Lincoln, or the Archdeacon, or his official, or the Chancellor set over them by the Bishop of Lincoln. It is probable, however, that even then, and certain that soon afterwards, the Chancellor was not a mere episcopal officer, but elected by the scholars, though confirmed by the Bishop. Finally, in 1244, a Royal decree invested the Chancellor of the University with a substantive jurisdiction, not derived from the Bishop, and not subject to civil tribunals. This decree has been justly called the Magna Charta of the University; but as the Great Charter itself purported to define and extend rights already existing, so the Chancellor and scholars of the University are here treated as a corporate and self-governing body, which

already enjoyed important franchises under previous Ordinances of the Crown.

The famous University thus developed, by stages no longer to be traced by the historian, out of schools as humble as those which languished under the shadow of many a cathedral, was destined to fill a larger space in the mediæval history of England than any corporation, except only the City of London. And yet, at first sight, the seed once sown by unknown hands in the little town of Oxford might seem to have been favoured by no special advantages of soil or climate. But the earlier annals of that town may help us to understand why it became the home of a great University, while the schools of Canterbury, Winchester, and Peterborough fell into decay and oblivion. In the wars of the Saxon Heptarchy, and still more in the long struggle with the Danes, its situation, on the great border-stream of Wessex and Mercia, had given it a high degree of strategical importance. There were held three National Councils, at least, of the highest interest; there were enacted sundry tragical scenes of the Danish invasion; there English law was solemnly accepted under the Danish king, Canute; and there Danish law was adopted once more in the year before the Conquest. There had resided Edmund Ironside, Canute, and Harold Harefoot, who actually died in the City; while Edward the Confessor was born in the neighbouring village of Islip. There was erected a castle to command the passage of the river by Robert D'Oilgi, one of the Conqueror's barons; and there a country palace, called Beaumont, was built for Henry I., with a bowling-green and gardens, which became a favourite resort of the earlier Norman kings. A hunting-seat and park, serving the purpose of a menagerie, had already been established at Woodstock, and the surrounding country, then covered with forest, was a paradise for Norman sportsmen. Council after Council was held at Oxford in the twelfth century; its Castle is memorable for the winter siege conducted by Stephen and the romantic escape of the Empress Maud; Henry II. lived much at Woodstock and Beaumont, and granted the citizens of Oxford

a charter which placed it in a position second only to that of London; Richard I., himself born at Beaumont, enlarged this charter just before going on the Crusade; John, born at Woodstock, often visited Oxford, and summoned National Assemblies to meet there on several great occasions. The City of Oxford figures in many leading events of Henry III.'s reign, and that unfortunate king seems to have shown more wisdom in his frequent regulations of University matters than he did in his government of England. Such facts as these alone go far to explain the influences under which the obscure Schools of Oxford expanded into an University. In days when there was no real capital of England, and when the governing power was practically lodged in the hands of the King and his Council, wherever they might be assembled, the attractions of Oxford to ambitious students must have quite eclipsed those of older and wealthier towns seldom honoured by the presence of a Court.

But there can be no doubt that Oxford also owed much to its geographical position, which rendered it not only a natural stronghold, but a place easily accessible by water or road from the more populous districts of central, southern, and western England. In this respect, neither Bristol nor any one of the great cathedral towns in these districts could bear comparison with it; and if Cambridge gradually became a worthy rival, it was partly by virtue of like advantages over great commercial and ecclesiastical centres of the eastern counties, such as Norwich or Lincoln. The very reasons which had originally made Oxford a resort of kings, a mustering-place of armies, and a meeting-place of National Councils, continued to operate for the benefit of its Schools, until they claimed the guardianship of the Pope, and earned the respect of Western Christendom. The disorders which befel the University of Paris in 1229, and caused its temporary dispersion, largely contributed to strengthen the ascendancy of Oxford. Henry III., skilfully profiting by this misfortune, encouraged a migration to England, and succeeded in inducing several French teachers of eminence, with many of their scholars, to

settle in the new English University. But it would be unjust not to acknowledge the debt of the University to monastic Orders in its infancy, and, still more, to the Friars in the next stage of its development. Without the shelter provided by religious houses, the best class of its earliest students might never have sought education there. Without the motive power supplied by the educational zeal of the Friars, its intellectual life would certainly have been much feebler in the thirteenth century—especially during that interval between the death of Robert Grossete, the great reforming Bishop of Lincoln, and the rise of Colleges, dating from the foundation of Merton in 1274. It was the Dominicans who first enlisted the Aristotelian philosophy in the service of the Church; it was the Franciscans who adopted, if they did not produce, the two greatest leaders of Oxford thought in the thirteenth century—Roger Bacon and Robert Grossete. When the College system was initiated by Walter de Merton, the University system was fully organised, and the convents, as well as the Halls, were full of eager students. What the Colleges provided was, not so much new aids or incentives to study, as a tranquil retreat for adult scholars, and the discipline of a well-regulated home for the boys who then formed so large a part of the Academical society.

This is a feature of the mediæval University which is seldom adequately realised. Oxford was then, not only the chief training-school of the more learned clerks destined for the secular priesthood; it was also the great high-school of half the country. Thousands of schoolboys were learning grammar there, while their seniors were being exercised in logical disputations before and after attaining the Bachelor's degree, and a much smaller number of Masters were engaged in scholastic or scientific research. Even the average age of the University and College lecturers was probably much lower than it now is, and the governing, as well as the teaching power, was mainly vested in the so-called Regents, or junior Masters of Arts. But the Academical society of that age,

consisting so largely of very young men, was, for another reason, thoroughly democratic. The nobility and country-gentry were mostly engrossed by warlike pursuits, and the young squire was trained in castles rather than in College lecture-rooms. The richer burghers and higher trading-classes troubled themselves about learning as little as the barons and their retainers. It was the lower-middle class in town and country, and even the peasantry, from which Oxford students were chiefly drawn; and, like the Maynooth students of our own time, they retained in an intensified form the prejudices of their ancestry. Latin was the only literary tongue, and no one could properly keep the accounts of a petty manor without a certain knowledge of it, which could be acquired most readily at the University. Many of those who came there in search of such humble professional qualifications, actually begged their way to Oxford, and all the evidence to be derived from University and College records proves conclusively that the common herd of students, inmates of Halls and inns and lodging houses, lived in a state of great poverty. Crowded together in miserable sleeping-rooms and lecture-rooms, often rendering more or less menial services in return for their instruction, and sometimes rescued from insolvency by loans from the University chest, they knew nothing of domestic care or comfort, and were strangers to all those frank and generous relations which naturally spring up among young Englishmen, especially of gentle birth, in the kindly intercourse of modern College life.

And here I will venture to borrow a passage from my own History of the University :

Under such conditions, and in such a society, it was utterly impossible that education or learning could flourish generally, according to our modern ideas; and yet it is certain that a restless and even feverish activity of speculation prevailed within an inner circle of philosophical spirits, to which there are few parallels in the history of thought. If their treasury of knowledge was scanty in the extreme, yet the range of their studies was truly sublime, both in its aims and in its orbit. In the chilly squalor of uncarpeted

and unwarmed chambers, by the light of narrow and unglazed casements, or the gleam of flickering oil-lamps, poring over dusky manuscripts hardly to be deciphered by modern eyesight, undisturbed by the boisterous din of riot and revelry without, men of humble birth, and dependent on charity for bare subsistence, but with a noble self-confidence transcending that of Bacon or of Newton, thought out and copied out those subtle masterpieces of mediæval lore purporting to unveil the hidden laws of Nature as well as the dark counsels of Providence and the secrets of human destiny, which—frivolous and baseless as they may appear under the scrutiny of a later criticism—must still be ranked among the grandest achievements of speculative reason. We must remember that archery and other outdoor sports were then mostly in the nature of martial exercises, reserved for the warlike classes, while music and the fine arts were all but unknown, and the sedentary labour of the student was relieved neither by the athletic nor by the æsthetic pastimes of our own more favoured age. Thus, driven inward upon itself, the fire of intellectual ambition burned with a tenfold intensity, and it was tempered by no such humility as the infinite range of modern science imposes on the boldest of its disciples. In many a nightly vigil, and in many a lonely ramble over the wild hillsides beyond Cowley and Hincksey, or along the riversides between Godstow and Iffley, these pioneers of philosophical research, to whom alchemy was chemistry, and astronomy but the key to astrology, constantly pursued their hopeless quest of Wisdom as it was dimly conceived by the patriarch Job, pressing Aristotle into the service of mediæval theology—which they regarded as the science of sciences—and inventing a mysterious phraseology which to us has lost its meaning, but which they mistook for solid knowledge, fondly imagining that it might lead them upward to some primary law governing the whole realm of matter and of mind. They failed, indeed, because success was hopeless; but their very failure paved the way for the ‘new knowledge’ of the next century, and cleared the ground for the methods and discoveries which have made other names immortal.

It is no less certain that, while it was regarded by Popes and Bishops as an integral part of the vast Church-system—*schola secunda ecclesiæ*—the mediæval University maintained throughout an attitude of proud independence towards ecclesiastical superiors. That august sacerdotal power, armed



with the terrors of the unseen world, before which princes and nobles were often forced to bow, treated Oxford University less as a dutiful handmaid than as a potent ally. One of the earliest events in its annals is the interdict imposed, in 1238, by the Papal Legate, Otho, upon the clerks of Oxford, in consequence of an outrage committed upon him by some disorderly students; and in this case the cause of the University was stoutly maintained against him by Robert Grossete and other English Bishops. In 1254 Innocent IV. exempted the masters and scholars from vexatious appeals to Papal jurisdiction. About the same time, both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the King himself invited the judgment of the University on controversies between themselves and certain Bishops; while in 1257 the liberties of the University were defended before the King at St. Albans against its own paramount superior, the Bishop of Lincoln. In the beginning of the next century, Oxford signalised itself by vigorous protests against the spiritual despotism of the Papacy, already discredited by its subjection to French influence at Avignon. Soon afterwards the University triumphed, after a long struggle, over the non-resident Cardinal Archdeacon De Mota, who had assumed to exercise jurisdiction through local agents. The Cardinal invoked the authority of the Pope; the University was supported effectively by Edward II. and Edward III. Finally, in 1368, a Bull of Pope Urban solemnly ratified the right of the University to elect its own Chancellor, without seeking the confirmation of its diocesan, the Bishop of Lincoln. Meanwhile, the University had been engaged for a whole century in vigorously combating the encroachments of the Mendicant Orders, the Dominicans and Franciscans, who not only succeeded in diverting pupils from the Academical Schools into their own more commodious lecture-rooms, but claimed for their theological students the privilege of exemption from regular exercises in Arts. So far back as 1253, the Oxford Masters of Arts had defeated these pretensions, which had been partially sanctioned by the University of Paris; but the practice of seducing young students into taking religious vows

seems to have continued until it was decisively checked by an University statute of Edward III.'s reign. The Pope vainly interfered on behalf of the regular clergy, who, however, succeeded in inducing Parliament to annul the obnoxious statute. But Parliament also annulled any Papal Bulls to be procured by the Friars which might prejudice the rights of the University, and Edward III. issued a Royal order that the Chancellor of Oxford should not be summoned to appear before the Roman Court.

The place of the University in English history during the Middle Ages must, of course, be mainly determined by its intellectual influence, for with State affairs, as then understood, it had no concern whatever. The extent of its influence on the intellectual life of the nation may be measured by the part that it played at three great epochs—the age of the Schoolmen, the age of Wyclif, and the age of the Renaissance.

In his brilliant description of the Scholastic Philosophy, Dean Milman points out that two out of the five greatest Schoolmen were Englishmen, and both of these are claimed by the University of Oxford. It cannot, indeed, be proved with absolute certainty that either of these—Duns Scotus, or William of Ockham—was actually educated at Oxford. The evidence of the former having been a Fellow of Merton is not conclusive, and the records of that College do not support the statement, long received as indubitable, that Ockham, too, was among its early Fellows. But that Oxford was the chief stronghold of Scholasticism in England, and the chief battleground of the famous but utterly futile controversy between the Nominalists and Realists, admits of no doubt at all. Several writers of the highest eminence in the second rank of Schoolmen are known to have studied or lectured there. One of these, Alexander de Hales, belongs to the age before the rise of Colleges. Two others—Walter Burley, who earned the enviable title of *Doctor Planus*, or *Perspicuus*, and Thomas Bradwardine, Archbishop of Canterbury—were certainly Fellows of Merton, to whose members Bradwardine expressly

dedicates his great treatise, 'De Causâ Dei.' Mediæval Theology may almost be said to have ultimately formulated itself in the Schools of Oxford, which eclipsed even those of Paris in the fourteenth century; and the boldness of speculation there encouraged made itself sensibly felt, not only in the doctrinal teaching of English Churchmen, but in the resolute stand made by the English Church against the pretensions of the Holy See. But the Oxford of the Schoolmen also produced a scholar and philosopher of no merely scholastic order, whose fame now towers above that of all his philosophical contemporaries. While the Franciscan School at Oxford was earning an European reputation in Theology and scholastic lore under the great Friar, Adam Marsh, Roger Bacon, himself a Franciscan, was anticipating modern scholarship by his superiority to learned dogmatism, and modern science by his independent researches in astronomy and optics, mechanics and chemistry. The spirit represented and kindled at Oxford by Roger Bacon never wholly died out there until it was quickened into new life by the Renaissance and the Reformation. A large number of advanced students in the University are known to have prosecuted lifelong studies in mathematics and physics during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the ancient library of Merton College alone contained numerous manuscripts on these subjects written or presented by resident Fellows. The wholesale destruction of such manuscripts, as well as of those relating to school-divinity, in the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI., has made it impossible to estimate the full extent and nature of the knowledge attained by Oxford men of science in the Middle Ages. Doubtless it yielded few direct fruits in the shape of discoveries or inventions, but it cannot have been wholly barren in its effect on the Academical mind; and the eminently liberal tone of English thought, even before the Renaissance, may probably have been due, in some degree, to Roger Bacon and his almost forgotten successors.

But, of all the English Schoolmen, the one whose career most properly belongs to the history of Oxford is the last

and most illustrious of them all—John Wyclif, ‘the Evangelical Doctor’ of the fourteenth century. Three Colleges have claimed the honour of enrolling this remarkable man among their *alumni*, and not without historical warrant. It is highly probable that he was a Fellow of Merton, and certain that he was at one time Master of Balliol, at another, an inmate, though not a member, of Queen’s; while there is at least good reason to believe that he was the first Warden of Canterbury College, since absorbed into Christ Church. It is known that he also held various benefices in the country. But the chief work of his life was carried on at Oxford, where he formed a School of his own, and was held in the highest honour. There his notable sermons were preached, and there his marvellous skill in disputation was matured. Thence he was summoned, in 1377, to appear before the Convocation of Canterbury, and there, under a Papal Bull issued soon afterwards, he was to be cited to appear before the Pope himself within three months. In another Bull of the same date, Gregory XI. severely reproved the University for harbouring Lollards in its bosom, and enjoined that John Wyclif and his adherents should be handed over to Archbishop Sudbury and Bishop Courtenay. Loud protests were made against this demand in the Oxford Convocation, which, after all, forbore to pass a formal condemnation of Wyclif’s teaching. It was in Oxford that he organised and located his new Order of itinerant preachers, and it was in the Schools of Oxford that he propounded (in 1381) his twelve ‘conclusions,’ or theses, on the Eucharist, which drew down upon him, not only the official censure of the Chancellor, supported by ten Doctors of Divinity, but also the hostility of the Mendicant Friars, who had formerly been his allies. The next Chancellor, however, was a friend of Wyclif, and when a Committee or Council of Divines, assembled by the new Archbishop (Courtenay), despatched to Oxford a mandate for the extirpation of Lollard doctrines, their emissary, Stokes, found the leading dignitaries of the University arrayed against him, with the hearty concurrence of a majority among the Masters of Arts. The Chancellor, indeed, replied that

compliance with the mandate was as much as his life was worth; and though he, with other followers of Wyclif, was at last compelled to submit by the intervention of the King's Council, Lollardism died hard, if it died at all, in the University. Though a Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, held at Oxford in 1382, succeeded in silencing its spokesmen for a while, and Wyclif's failing health apparently disabled him thenceforth from active controversy, Oxford, as Mr. Maxwell Lyte points out, 'continued to be the headquarters of the reforming movement.' Writ after writ was addressed to its authorities, urging them to suppress Lollard treatises, and eleven years after Wyclif's death the Chancellor of the University was ordered by the King, it would seem in vain, to have a catalogue of his errors drawn up by the Doctors of Divinity, with a view of banishing all who should maintain them. At last Parliament, false to its ancient traditions, was enlisted on the side of persecution. The infamous statutes passed against heretics in the reign of Henry IV. had, probably, quite as much effect in putting down Lollardism in the University as the despotic censorship of books and lectures established by Archbishop Arundel and a provincial Council held for this purpose at Oxford in 1409. At all events, in 1409 the obnoxious works of Wyclif, under the strongest pressure from Lambeth, were publicly burned at Carfax, in the centre of Oxford, and in 1411 the most stringent decrees against all who should embrace his tenets were extorted from the University, which had never ceased to be proud of him. If ever there was a typical representative of Oxford, it was John Wyclif, and his truly heroic figure, viewed across an interval of five centuries, assumes proportions of which neither his disciples nor his enemies could then form any true conception.

The part played by the University of Oxford in the Revival of Letters was scarcely less important than it had been in the Reform movement of Wyclif, which had assuredly paved the way for it. Dean Colet, Erasmus, and Sir Thomas More have been singled out as prominently 'The Oxford Reformers'

of the Renaissance; but the title is equally deserved by Grocyn and Linacre, if not by Archbishop Warham, and, still more, by Cardinal Wolsey. The rise of the New Learning, as it was then called, is generally dated from the capture of Constantinople in 1453, and the light of its dawning certainly spread to England from Italy. Thither Linacre, a young Fellow of All Souls, went out as early as 1485; and there he was joined, in 1488, by Grocyn, who had probably been his instructor at the University, and who is described by Erasmus as the first of English scholars. Not that he, or any one single individual, can be regarded as the solitary pioneer in England of that unique literary revolution which brought to a close the history of mediæval civilisation. No doubt, the foundation of great public grammar-schools like Winchester and Eton helped to prepare the minds of English scholars for the reception of Greek culture. Moreover, Professor Montagu Burrows, in his interesting Memoir of William Grocyn, has adduced strong reasons for believing that he owed much to the instruction of Vitelli, an Italian lecturer already settled at Oxford, and something to Chaundler, Warden of New College, who seems to have been Vitelli's patron. But there is conclusive evidence that Grocyn was justly regarded by his contemporaries as the English patriarch of the New Learning. It is possible that he taught Greek at Oxford before his visit to Italy; it is certain that, having studied at Florence under the famous teachers Politian and Chalcondyles, he returned to Oxford, and delivered at Exeter College the first public lectures in Greek that had been heard in England. Nor was he a mere 'Humanist,' or votary of Pagan literature. On the contrary, he warmly encouraged Aldus's designs for publishing new editions of the Scriptures in the original languages, and, if Erasmus can be trusted, was 'exceedingly observant of ecclesiastical rules, almost to the point of superstition.'

About four years after the return of Grocyn and Linacre, Colet, who had taken his degree at Oxford, and then held a living in Suffolk, proceeded on a like errand to Italy. His interests were theological rather than literary, and it is pro-

bable that he came under the influence of Savonarola at Florence; but his studies embraced the New Learning in all its branches, and when he announced a course of public lectures on St. Paul's Epistles at Oxford, about the end of 1496, he was fully-equipped for the contest that awaited him against the old Scholastic Philosophy. These lectures were attended, not only by large audiences of students, but also by doctors and abbots. They were, in fact, the earliest essays in that Biblical criticism which formed a most important element in the 'New Learning,' as propagated in England—so unlike the brilliant semi-Pagan reaction typified by the Greek and Italian Renaissance. A year or two later, Colet was joined in Oxford by Erasmus, himself an organic link between the Renaissance and the Reformation, who came to complete his study of the Greek language. Though Erasmus's stay in Oxford was short, his own letters conclusively prove how much he owed to his intercourse with the little circle of Oxford friends, which embraced also Sir Thomas More, who had then left the University, and was studying law in London. It is true that More's legal and political career had no direct connection with his University life; that Erasmus's greatest works were produced on the Continent or at Cambridge; that Linacre's vast acquirements were chiefly displayed in London, where he founded the College of Physicians; that Colet is better known as Dean of St. Paul's, founder of St. Paul's School, and the first preacher of his day, than as an interpreter of St. Paul's Epistles at Oxford. But it is equally true that in the minds and hearts of all these men the sacred flame of a new intellectual Gospel and the noble ambition of propagating it among their countrymen was conceived and even nursed into maturity within the University.

Their influence made itself sensibly felt on their Oxford contemporaries and juniors. Lilly, the first of English grammarians, was practically a disciple of Colet, and not only Colet, but Erasmus and Cardinal Wolsey, co-operated with him in the compilation of his Grammar. Tyndall, whose name is second to none among the English Reformers, is stated by

John Foxe to have been 'brought up from a child in the University of Oxford, where he, by long continuance, grew up and increased, as well in the knowledge of tongues and other liberal arts as specially in the knowledge of the Scriptures.' Yet Tyndall loudly protested against the perfunctory nature of University studies in his own time, against the arbitrary restrictions on the free interpretation of Scripture, and against the scandalous ease with which degrees were granted. Wolsey himself, who must never be forgotten as a zealous promoter of the Renaissance in England, had graduated at Magdalen College before the Oxford Reformers had commenced their labours. But he was among the first to appreciate the significance of the classical revival, and to the last never ceased to be its most discerning as well as its most generous patron. It must have been with his sanction, though it was at More's instance, that a peremptory Royal order put down the barbarous faction of so-called Trojans, who actually endeavoured to suppress Greek studies in the University. His favourite project for the foundation of Christ Church, as a propaganda of 'the new learning in the service of the old Church,' had been partly forestalled by Bishop Fox in his foundation of Corpus Christi College. But Wolsey's design was on a scale of grandeur before unknown, and the policy of applying monastic endowments to educational purposes was originated by him, though reversed by the rapacity of Henry VIII. and his courtiers.

But the place of Oxford University in English and European history during the later Middle Ages is not to be determined solely by its contributions to learning and Theology. Its influence is strongly attested, not only by the frequent intervention of English kings in its internal affairs, but also by its relations with the Papal See. We have seen how vigorous was the action taken by the Pope in the suppression of Wyclif's adherents at Oxford. On the other hand, the University had no mean share in the termination of the great schism then undermining the Church, and was consulted more than once by the Crown on that subject. When a Provincial



Synod was held in London to consider the conduct of Gregory XII., the Chancellors of Oxford and Cambridge were present in person. No doubt the University of Paris assumed the lead in the long negotiations for restoring the unity of the Latin Church; yet the University of Oxford steadily and successfully resisted the scheme of settlement proposed by its elder sister, insisting that a General Council must be summoned. This General Council, which met at Pisa in 1409, deposed both the rival Popes, and procured the election of a Friar known as Alexander V., who had taken a Bachelor of Divinity's degree at Oxford; being the only Pope who ever did so. The Bishop of Salisbury, the head of an English deputation to Pisa, had been Chancellor of Oxford, and received instructions from the University for the protest which he there delivered against the abuses of the Church. Before the Council of Constance, held in 1414, the University of Oxford drew up an elaborate series of articles for the reformation of the Church. At that Council, which established the supremacy of General Councils over the Papacy, the University was ably represented; and Henry of Abingdon, afterwards Warden of Merton, produced a great impression by his sermon advocating the views embodied in those articles. The University was specially invited to appear by its delegates at the Council of Basle, in 1431; and though it was reduced by poverty to solicit contributions towards the expenses of the mission, it found a worthy representative in John Kemp, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. On two subsequent occasions it received marks of special respect from Popes Eugenius IV. and Innocent VIII. Probably, if the archives of the Lateran and the Vatican had been preserved intact, and could now be ransacked by an Academical historian, the Universities of Europe, and, not least, the University of Oxford, would be found to have engaged the attention of the Papal Court to a far greater extent than is commonly realised. In the meantime, enough evidence remains to show that, within the ecclesiastical sphere at least, it was a power to be conciliated as well as to be controlled.

The close of the fifteenth century, so momentous in the annals of European civilisation, wrought an insensible but irrevocable change in the position and character of Oxford University. The Revival of Learning had checked the degeneracy which set in with the decay of scholastic exercises during the previous half-century, but the marvellous series of events which followed it, dividing mediæval from modern history, was destined to have a contrary effect. The diffusion of knowledge through the invention of printing, aided by the improvement in paper-making; the burst of commercial enterprise consequent on the discovery of America and of a maritime route to India; the revolt against Church authority and clerical ascendancy, which underlay the Reformation—these were causes which could not but diminish the unique prestige of the Universities. Though Oxford is said to have been the first place at which movable types were employed in England, and though books were certainly printed there between 1479 and 1486, the Press was sure to prove a most formidable rival of the Oxford Schools. When the only books were manuscripts, the Universities and the very few other institutions which possessed large collections of manuscripts attracted the whole literary class from all parts of the country. When instruction in the sciences was only to be obtained from the lips of a living teacher, and when schools hardly existed elsewhere, except in connection with cathedrals or monasteries, the lecture-rooms of Oxford were thronged with students of all ages, and represented, with those of Cambridge, the central machinery of national education. When the Church ruled supreme over the wide realm of thought, and learning was the monopoly of 'clerics,' the great ecclesiastical stronghold of Oxford far surpassed the Metropolis itself as an intellectual centre. When Latin was the one language of scholars, and English literature hardly existed, the Academical masters of Latinity, especially as they were carefully trained in disputation, maintained a peerless supremacy over their less favoured competitors in the clerical, medical, and legal professions. When foreign trade was confined within mediæval

channels, and the mercantile aristocracy had not yet developed its strength, the clerks of Oxford held a social position far above that to which their birth or wealth entitled them. In the new order which took its birth from the Reformation, the exclusive privileges of the Universities became inevitably depreciated, and their function in the body-politic somewhat humbler than it had been in the golden age of clerical ascendancy. But they did not cease to form an organic and energetic part of the national life. When the curtain fell on the vast drama of the Middle Ages, transforming almost every mediæval institution in Church and State, the University of Oxford re-appeared in a more secular character, to claim henceforth a less commanding, but not less distinctive, position in English history.

## II

WITH the fall of Cardinal Wolsey—one of the greatest landmarks in our history—the University of Oxford entered on a new phase of its existence. Henceforth, its political and social importance were to increase, and a more conspicuous place was to be reserved for it in those spheres of national life which fill the pages of historians. But it was to lose that ‘original brightness’ which it derived from being a part, though a very independent part, of the vast fabric of the mediæval Church. Instead of attracting humble pilgrims from the lowest ranks of society, converting them into ‘clerks,’ and qualifying them to fill places more or less honourable in the great ecclesiastical hierarchy, it became more and more a training-school for the lay professions, now definitely formed. It was no longer to share with Cambridge, and one or two public schools, an almost exclusive monopoly of English education, from the highest realms of philosophical speculation to the simplest rudiments of grammar. It was no longer to be the *schola secunda ecclesie* in Europe; and the intellectual centre of gravity in England itself was inevitably to be shifted to the commercial and political centre

of the kingdom, in the Metropolis. In the ampler and brighter day now dawning upon the nation, the light of scholastic learning, so long kept alive at Oxford, could not fail to wax pale and dim. In becoming secularised, the University forfeited that transcendent prestige which it owed to Church authority; but it was to be used as a powerful engine of State-authority in working out the various stages of the English Reformation, and perhaps to exercise a more potent influence in moulding the national character.

The first occasion on which the University came into contact with the new statecraft of Henry VIII. was that of his famous appeal to the chief Universities of Europe on the legality of his intended divorce. This expedient is supposed to have been contemplated by him in 1527, but to have been abandoned by reason of discouraging reports from Oxford and Cambridge. However this may be, the question was formally laid before the Oxford Convention in 1529, not without a significant mixture of Royal promises and threats. Nevertheless, though a docile majority of seniors was in favour of compliance, the younger Masters of Arts—worthy successors of those who had supported Wyclif—stood firm in their refusal. It was not until two other Royal commands had been received, and the Graduates in Arts had been excluded from Convocation by a clever stratagem, that the desired vote was secured; not, however, in the full Convocation of the University, but in a packed committee, empowered to act in its name. Soon afterwards the King gave a fresh proof of his anxiety to keep the University under his control, by coming to visit it in person. The Plantagenet sovereigns, as we have seen, had often held their Courts at Oxford, and the same compliment was paid to it by Edward IV. and Richard III. But the visit of Henry VIII. was essentially political, and his example was followed by every one of his successors, except Edward VI. and Mary, down to the reign of George I. It is significant of his motives that, on this occasion, he took back into his own hands the Charter of the University, which he did not restore until 1543.

Meanwhile, in 1534, the University was again invited to pronounce a solemn verdict, no longer upon a question of private right, but upon the gravest issue of national policy ever submitted to its judgment—that of the Royal Supremacy. This was, in truth, a foregone conclusion, and the University was not disloyal to its traditional principles in casting off the Papal yoke, which it had always borne impatiently, and which had been deliberately repudiated earlier in the year by the Convocations of both Provinces, after several preparatory measures had been passed in succession. Accordingly, in common with these bodies and the University of Cambridge, it declared that ‘The Bishop of Rome hath no greater jurisdiction conferred on him by God in this kingdom of England than any other foreign Bishop.’ By this time Protestant doctrines, propagated by some of the scholars imported from Cambridge and the Continent, had taken root in Oxford soil. So far back as 1527, Cardinal Wolsey, tolerant as he was, had thought it necessary to issue a Commission for the discovery of heretical books in the University, and Garrett, who had disseminated them, was compelled to fly. The King himself was alarmed, and made vigorous efforts to put down free thinking among the students. Several years were to elapse before the spirit of Wyclif should be allowed free scope in Oxford; but it was now thought prudent to secure both Universities against the danger of reaction towards Rome by an Act, passed in 1536, which required every candidate for a degree to abjure allegiance to the Pope.

The determination of Henry VIII. to place the new Church order on a sure footing at Oxford was further shown by Thomas Cromwell’s Visitation in 1535—the first of several Visitations whereby his successors, and the leaders of the Commonwealth, sought to regulate the Universities, as the great fountain-heads of education, into harmony with the principles adopted by the Government of the day. This Visitation, or Commission, as we should call it, of which Dr. Leighton was the most prominent member, had a twofold object—to ensure ecclesiastical conformity, and to promote

classical learning at the expense of the old scholastic discipline, which had revived since the Renaissance. The study of the Canon Law was suppressed, and Leighton joyfully reported that 'Dunce' (Duns Scotus) was relegated to an Academical limbo; while the leaves of scholastic manuscripts, torn up by wholesale, might be seen fluttering about New College quadrangle. But the study of Aristotle was enjoined, together with that of the Holy Scriptures—an interesting survival of the strange alliance between Aristotelian logic and Christian theology framed by the Dominican teachers of the Middle Ages. Meanwhile, Cardinal Wolsey's great foundation was remodelled, on a reduced scale, into the modern Christ Church; new classical lectureships were established at the expense of the richer colleges, and the five Regius Professorships were endowed out of the spoils of the Church. Moreover, the loyalty of the University was rewarded by a special exemption from the payment of firstfruits, or tenths, recently granted by statute to the Crown.

The respect of the King for the University, and his desire to retain it as a trustworthy instrument of his dynastic aims and ecclesiastical policy, was displayed in a signal manner after the dissolution of monasteries. Monks and friars were regarded as the bodyguard of a foreign power, which had become the enemy of the Monarchy, and though a formidable insurrection was provoked by Cromwell's barbarous treatment of them, it is marvellous how little popular support they commanded in their hour of need. On the other hand, the Colleges had long been identified with the secular clergy: they had sided with the Crown and Parliament in resisting the encroachments of Rome; they had come to rank among national institutions, and they had cheerfully accepted the Royal Supremacy. The famous reply of Henry VIII. to some of his courtiers, who clamoured for a Dissolution of Colleges, was, therefore, a genuine expression of the sentiment which he shared with the nation, and might, perhaps, be studied with advantage by modern reformers of the utilitarian school. 'Whereas we had a regard onlie to pull down sin by defacing

the monasteries, you have a desire also to overthrow all goodness by subversion of Colleges. I tell you, Sirs, that I judge no land in England better bestowed than that which is given to our Universities. For by their maintenance our realme shall be well governed when we be dead and rotten. I love not learning so ill that I will impair the revenewes of any one House by a penie, whereby it may be upholden.' Nevertheless, the general sense of insecurity produced by the King's despotic rule, and the arbitrary restrictions imposed on Protestantism by the Six Articles, could not but have a blighting effect on the University system. Nor did the dissolution of monasteries bring to it any accession of strength. Almost every great monastery had maintained scholars at Oxford or Cambridge by means of exhibitions, if not in lodgings under its own control. These were now cast adrift, and there is good reason for believing that some of them contributed to swell the vast crowd of sturdy vagrants against whom savage enactments were passed by obsequious Parliaments in the latter part of Henry VIII.'s reign. The disappearance of Oseney Abbey, Rewley Abbey, and the great churches of the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Bernardines, left Oxford all the poorer architecturally, and the new studies failed to attract such multitudes of eager students as those which, in earlier times, had thronged the lecture-rooms of famous logicians, and engaged in bloodthirsty conflicts with the citizens.

We may pass lightly over the next stage in the history of the Reformation at Oxford, because it must be confessed that, as compared with Cambridge, that University played a subordinate, if not undignified, part during this eventful period. When the Protector Somerset and Archbishop Cranmer determined to reform it in the interests of the new Anglican Church, in the reign of Edward VI., they had met with no effective opposition. It is probable that Huber, the German historian, may be right in asserting that a decided majority in the University, including the most learned men and the best scholars, was in favour of the old religion. But many of

them fled before the Commission, or Visitation, appointed in 1549, and, of those who remained, many were forcibly expelled to make room for Peter Martyr and other Protestant teachers imported from other universities. In dealing with Colleges, the spirit in which they acted was ruthlessly iconoclastic, and not only were the old services abolished, but altars, images, statues, monuments, organs, and everything else which seemed to savour of superstition, were defaced or swept away. The amount of destruction wrought by their orders, and those of Cromwell's Visitors, in the College libraries, will never be known, but it seems to have resembled, on a humbler scale, the losses incurred by learning in the conflagration of the Alexandrine Library, or the Latin capture of Constantinople. Philosophy fared no better than Natural Science, and it is recorded that 'cartloads' of classical and scientific manuscripts were consigned to the flames, together with many an illuminated masterpiece of scholastic literature. At the same time, new University Statutes were drawn up, remodelling the Faculty of Arts, and eliminating everything which could favour Popery from the Academical constitution. But the Protector Somerset refused, like Henry VIII., to sanction any general disendowment of Colleges, and the Edwardine Statutes, as they were called, were more liberal in their spirit than might have been expected. Seven years later, the importance of manipulating the University for Imperial purposes was once more recognised under Queen Mary, whose accession had been hailed with loyal demonstrations at Oxford, not yet estranged from the old religion, and who afterwards showed her preference for Oxford over the less Catholic University of Cambridge. A fresh Visitation was instituted by Cardinal Pole. Peter Martyr and the leading Protestant lecturers now made their escape, Heads and Fellows of Colleges were released from their obligation to renounce the authority of the Pope, the Mass superseded the Prayer-Book, and before long Oxford became the scene of those Protestant martyrdoms which have left an indelible impression of horror and sympathy on the English mind.



It is often said, and not without reason, that Oxford burned the great Protestant divines whom Cambridge educated. But it must not be supposed that Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer were actually tried and condemned by an University Court. It is, indeed, a remarkable proof of the deference paid to University opinion by Mary's advisers, not only that Oxford should have been selected as the place for the shameful travesty of justice enacted in April 1554, and again in September 1555, but also that the proceedings should have been made to include an Academical disputation in the Divinity School, followed by a judicial inquisition held in the choir of St. Mary's Church. Still, the Commission which sat in St. Mary's Church on April 14, 1554, under a mandate from the Crown, derived no authority from the University of Oxford, as such, but was, in effect, a Committee of the Convocation of Canterbury, with its Prolocutor, Dr. Weston, as President. His assessors were eight members of that Convocation, with the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge, as well as of Oxford, and Doctors of Divinity elected by each University. The sentence pronounced on this occasion was one of excommunication, and not of death, grave doubts being, in fact, entertained by Ultramontane Catholics upon the right of a Royal Commission to declare three bishops guilty of heresy. Accordingly, Ridley and Latimer, after a mitigated imprisonment of seventeen months in private houses, were finally tried before Commissioners appointed under the legatine authority of Cardinal Pole; while the Court which tried Cranmer had for its President, Brookes, the chief of these Commissioners, acting as sub-delegate of the Pope, with two proctors appointed by the Crown. But these mock trials were conducted, as before, in the choir of St. Mary's Church and the Divinity Schools; it was in St. Mary's that Cranmer was subjected to the ignominy of degradation, and when Ridley underwent a like indignity in the house where he was confined, Brookes was accompanied by the Vice-Chancellor of the University. Finally, when Ridley and Latimer were led out to be burned in Canditch, a sermon was preached before

the stake by an Academical preacher on the text, 'Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing'; and when Cranmer was required to repeat his previous recantations in prospect of death, St. Mary's Church was again selected as the scene of his humiliation. The sequel is well known. It was through an University mob, and past the Divinity Schools of the University, that he was hurried off, with brutal eagerness, to give at the stake that noble example of heroic constancy which has atoned for all his earlier errors in the eyes of Protestants, and crowned the martyrdoms of the English Reformation. Assuredly Oxford University has gained something of celebrity from the fact that in Oxford was lighted that candle of religious liberty which should never be put out; but it cannot be forgotten that, if the University itself did not, and could not, pass sentence of death on the martyrs, it made itself an accomplice in that memorable deed of infamy.

The reign of Elizabeth supplies fresh examples of the efforts made by the Tudor princes to conciliate and control the University of Oxford, as a formidable power in the body-politic. Within six months of her accession, she appointed a new body of Visitors, to make what she called 'a mild and gentle, not rigorous, reformation,' which, however, involved a strict enforcement of obedience to the Act of Supremacy. Though many graduates, as before, conformed readily enough, the Dean and two Canons of Christ Church, nine Heads of Colleges, and a considerable number of Fellows, were expelled or forced to resign. Some Protestant exiles returned from Zurich, Strasburg, and other foreign towns; but it is doubtful whether Oxford learning gained more from this accession than it lost by the migration of Catholic scholars to Douay. At all events, we know from the impartial testimony of Peter Martyr and Jewell how serious an intellectual and moral degeneracy had resulted from such rapid vicissitudes in religious doctrine and ecclesiastical government, unsettling the minds of students, and keeping Academical rulers in a constant state of suspense or time-serving. It was, doubtless,

with a view of counteracting these effects, and reviving the energies of a body on which she greatly relied for support, that Queen Elizabeth paid two State visits to Oxford, in 1566 and 1592, losing no opportunity on either occasion of rebuking extremists and 'precisians,' as she called them, and showing her resolution to have an Anglo-Catholic rather than a Puritan or Romanistic Church. It seems clear that a like far-sighted policy inspired the efforts of her favourite, Leicester, to reform the University, of which he became the Chancellor. Non-resident and courtier as he was, Leicester had the real good of Oxford at heart; and, repressive as some of his measures were, he cannot be greatly blamed for desiring to exclude the Romanising party, then openly disloyal, from positions of influence at Oxford. We may deplore his creation of a legislative oligarchy—to curb the old democratic spirit of the University—and, still more, his imposition of subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles and the Royal Supremacy, to be required from every student above sixteen years old on his matriculation. But we cannot forget that under his Chancellorship the University first obtained a parliamentary incorporation, that he earned an honourable place among its benefactors, and that most of the regulations which he recommended were intended, and wisely conceived, for the restoration of sound discipline.

This was the weak point of the Elizabethan University; and it was by no means strengthened by the introduction of a new test. Thenceforth the University of Oxford, once open to all Christendom, was narrowed to an exclusively Church of England institution, and became the favourite arena of Anglican controversy, developing more and more that special character, at once worldly and clerical, to which it owes its distinctive place in later history. While its highest dignitaries were mostly animated by intense party-spirit, rather than by zeal for education, its students fully shared in the genial laxity of manners, fostered by increasing luxury, which marked the age of Elizabeth. Her judicious patronage of Oxford culture was not without effect upon scholars like Bodley and

Savile, yet it may be doubted whether there was as much real vitality and freedom of thought in the Protestant Oxford of Elizabeth, as in the Catholic Oxford of the first three Edwards. The number of students was increased during her reign, but they were recruited from a wealthier class; there were more young gentlemen among them, and more of them were destined for lay professions or trade; but there was a smaller proportion of hardworking scholars; more of worldly accomplishments, but less of severe and earnest study.

It was the object of Archbishop Laud, during his long period of Academical ascendancy, to counteract such tendencies by a comprehensive reform of discipline, with a view of making Oxford once more a model school of the Church, while it should become a powerful bulwark of the Monarchy. James I. had followed the policy of the Tudors by patronising the Universities, visiting them in person, and taking an active interest in their affairs. In the year of his accession he gave them, for the first time, representation in Parliament, on the express ground that it was necessary for them to be protected, through Burgesses of their own, against the risk of ignorant legislation affecting their privileges. At the same time, he invited the Colleges to join him in a self-denying but abortive scheme for re-endowing benefices out of impropriated tithes—a scheme which Charles I., by a secret vow, but lately made known, bound himself to carry out if he should recover his throne. Soon afterwards he made over to them the right of presenting to all livings in Roman Catholic patronage, and thrice exempted them from liability to subsidies. He enlisted their support in the great struggle between the ecclesiastical Courts and the Common Law Judges; he secured their co-operation in compiling the Authorised Version of the Bible. But it was under the influence of Laud that he and his successor, Charles I., deliberately employed the University of Oxford as the instrument of reactionary statecraft. It was Laud's saying, 'Nothing can be transacted in the State without its being immediately winnowed in the Parliaments of the Scholars.' He was first known to the world as President of

St. John's College, and no more perfect specimen of the College don, in the old sense, ever rose to fill high office in the State. Laud clearly perceived, and the King was not slow to recognise, the natural affinity between Arminian theories of Church authority and absolutist notions of Divine Right. His first efforts, before he became Chancellor, were therefore directed to check the growth of Puritanism in the University, and in 1616 he procured a stringent order from the King, by the advice of the clergy in Convocation, for the subscription of the Three Articles in the Thirty-sixth Canon by every candidate for a degree, for strict attendance on University sermons, and for the enforcement of other safeguards against heterodoxy. Six years later—in 1622—the University disgraced itself by passing a declaratory resolution, absolutely condemning resistance to a reigning sovereign, offensive or defensive, upon any pretext whatever. Thenceforward, the doctrine of passive obedience may be said to have become the official creed of Oxford for at least two generations, and survivals of it appeared more than once in the eighteenth century.

It was in 1630 that Laud became Chancellor of Oxford, an office which he filled until his fall eleven years later; so that his personal government of the Academical body nearly coincided in duration with Charles I.'s personal government of the kingdom. It was characteristic of his inquisitorial energy, but it is also a significant proof of the space occupied by the University in his political and ecclesiastical designs, that petty Academical concerns received from him the same minute attention as the highest interests of Church and State. Some of his reforms were of permanent benefit, such as the introduction of the Proctorial Cycle, and, still more, the compilation of the Caroline Statutes, which remained in force within living memory. Other features of his administration betrayed his arbitrary temperament, such as his system of correspondence with confidential agents at Oxford, and his permanent establishment of a collegiate monopoly in University government. But there is no doubt that, in his dark and disastrous counsels, the aggrandisement of his University was

second only to the aggrandisement of his Church, or that he was highly successful in promoting it. Anthony Wood tells us that, under his Chancellorship, the University recovered its popularity, numbering 4,000 students; and, though it did not produce so many illustrious names as Cambridge during the seventeenth century, the generation of Oxford men which preceded the Civil War included not a few whose learning and piety might have adorned a happier age. That was no ordinary circle of University friends which shared the dignified hospitality and studious leisure of Falkland at Great Tew, comprising, as it did, Sheldon and Hammond, Morley and Earle, as well as Chillingworth, re-converted to Anglican doctrine by Laud himself. Nor was it only Churchmen whom the University trained under the guardianship of Laud. Among those who there disciplined themselves for political life during those golden days of respite were Sir John Eliot and John Hampden, John Pym, John Selden, Robert Blake, Speaker Lenthall, and Sir Nathaniel Brent, men who afterwards took a leading part on the Parliamentary side in the stormy times already looming on the horizon.

This is not the place to review that rapid succession of events, ever memorable for Englishmen, which brought about a temporary disruption of all our national institutions, with an almost complete suspension of Academical life at Oxford. Nor must we attempt to investigate the various military reasons which made Oxford a place of the first strategical importance during the campaigns of 1642 and the three following years. A glance at the instructive maps in Mr. Gardiner's History of this period will suffice to show that it stood nearly at the eastern extremity of the country, which for the most part declared for the King; while it was virtually the key to the Midland Counties. It was to Oxford that Charles I. repaired after the battle of Edgehill, and thither he retreated for the winter after his abortive march on London. Thenceforward, until the eve of his surrender to the Scotch in 1646, Oxford became, not only the base of operations for the Royal army, but the chief seat of the Royal Government. Already,

in 1625, when the plague was raging in London, the first Parliament of Charles I. had been adjourned to Oxford, and here in January 1644, he again summoned a Parliament, ignoring that assembled in permanent session at Westminster. A small body of loyal Peers and Commoners obeyed the summons, and assumed to hold a regular session, during which they vainly strove to open negotiations with the rebellious assembly then engaged in levying war against its sovereign. The reasons which thus converted Oxford into a Royalist capital were not merely strategical: no other provincial town could have contributed an equal weight of moral support to his cause; nowhere else could he have found an equal number of young and ardent spirits devoted to his interest: no other community would or could have replenished his empty treasury with equally valuable supplies of plate and ready money, or provided so many volunteers to fortify and defend the City, which now became once more the frontier-fortress of central England.

Seldom in history, and never in the annals of Oxford University, have characters so diverse been grouped together into so brilliant and picturesque a society as that which thronged the ancient City during the residence of Charles I., with his Queen, Henrietta Maria, in the autumn and winter of 1643—the last happy interlude of their ill-starred lives. Notwithstanding the paralysis of Academical studies, and the transformation of Colleges into barracks, neither religion nor learning was entirely banished from the University. Grave dons and gay young students were still to be seen in the streets, but too often in no Academical garb, and affecting the airs of Cavaliers, as they mingled with the ladies of the Court in Christ Church Walks and Trinity College Gardens, or with roystering troopers in the guardhouses at Rewley, where they entertained their ruder comrades with flashes of scholar-like wit. Most of the citizens, too—Roundheads as they might be—were glad to remain, secretly cherishing, perhaps, the hope of a future retribution, but not unwilling in the meanwhile to levy high rents for the lodging of those courtiers and military

officers for whom there was no room in the Colleges. With these were blended in strange variety other elements imported from the country or the Metropolis—lawyers who had come down to attend the Courts held by the Lord Keeper and one of his judicial brethren; the faithful remnant of the Lords and Commons, who sat in one of the Schools and the Convocation House respectively, while the University Acts were performed once more in St. Mary's Church; loyal gentlemen driven out of their manor-houses by the enemy; clergymen expelled from their parsonages; foreigners seeking audience of the perplexed and vacillating King; needy poets, musicians, and players in the service of the Court, who acted Shakespearian plays or lighter pieces in the College Halls. New Inn Hall was converted into a mint, where plate contributed by the Colleges and country squires was melted down and coined into the money for the payment of the troops. The 'Mercurius Aulicus,' the earliest of English newspapers, issued from the Oxford Press, and every broadside published in London was answered by a counter-broadside from the Royalist headquarters. Services were still performed in the Chapels; sermons were preached from the pulpit of St. Mary's; degrees were conferred wholesale, as rewards for loyalty, until they were so depreciated that at last the King promised to recommend no more candidates for them. The outward appearances of Academical routine were maintained with decorum; the King dined and supped in public, moving freely among his devoted adherents, with the royal grace and easy dignity which long seemed to have perished with the Stuarts; the Queen held those receptions in Merton College of which a tradition has survived to our own prosaic days; the far sense of danger, and warlike rumours from without, lent a fresh zest to amusement and to gallantry; and all the resources of courtly literature were employed to enliven a spectacle over which the awful catastrophe of that historical tragedy, unforeseen by the actors themselves, has shed a lurid glamour, never equalled by the romance of fiction.

The siege of Oxford, though many a student was stationed



on its ramparts, while others were formed into a complete regiment, belongs to the history of the City rather than of the University. It was, however, assuredly out of respect for the University that Fairfax addressed to the Governor of Oxford his well-known letter, in which he counselled a timely submission, that he might be enabled to preserve from ruin 'that place, so famous for learning'; and, in the final treaty of surrender, the privileges of the University, and even the constitutions of Colleges, were expressly guaranteed. Anthony Wood describes, in language which has often been quoted, the utter confusion in which the past three years had left the University: the Colleges impoverished, the lectures almost abandoned, many of the students dispersed, and others quite demoralised—'in a word, scarce the face of an University left, all things being out of order and disturbed.' Nevertheless, it is some proof of its inherent vigour that, no sooner was peace restored, than students began to return and collegiate life to revive. In the year 1646, the Parliament, following the example of so many sovereigns, decisively showed its anxiety to secure the allegiance of Oxford by commissioning seven ministers to convert the Academical mind to orthodoxy, through Presbyterian discourses from the pulpit. This expedient naturally failed to produce the desired effect, and in the year 1647 more effectual means were taken to purge the University of loyalists and prelatists, by issuing a solemn Visitation 'for the due correction of offences, abuses, and disorders, especially of late times, committed there.' This Visitation, twice renewed with important changes in the *personnel* of the Visitors, and more than one interval of suspended animation, lasted altogether for ten years, during the whole of which period the University was practically governed by Commission. The President of the first Visitors was Sir Nathaniel Brent, Warden of Merton, and, of his twenty-three colleagues, ten were clergymen and thirteen laymen, including the celebrated Prynne. The Visitors were instructed to inquire by oath concerning those who neglected to take the 'Solemn League and Covenant,' or the 'Negative Oath' against aiding the

King, those who opposed the orders of Parliament concerning ecclesiastical discipline, those who contravened 'any point of doctrine the ignorance whereof doth exclude from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper,' and those who had borne arms against the Parliament. By the same Ordinance, a standing Committee of Lords and Commons was appointed to receive reports and hear appeals from the Visitors. This Committee, being soon controlled by the dominant Independent faction in Parliament, began to overstep these functions, and sometimes took upon itself the right of legislating directly for the University. But the intestine feuds between the Presbyterians and Independents gave the University much the same advantage which St. Paul derived from the enmity of the Pharisees and Sadducees, enabling it to offer a passive but not ineffective resistance to the Visitors for several months, until the Parliamentary Chancellor, the Earl of Pembroke, arrived, in April 1648, to enforce obedience.

The dignified and forcible statement of 'Reasons' drawn up by the University to justify its action in not submitting to the new tests about to be imposed, was not unworthy of its best days, and, what is most remarkable, it was almost unanimously accepted in full Convocation. As Professor Huber says, the adoption of such an attitude at such a time goes far to redeem the reproach of cowardly subservience to Henry VIII. It fairly earned for the University the thanks of Parliament in 1665, and deserves, in some degree, the glowing eulogy of Clarendon. The University, he says, 'met in their Convocation, and, to their eternal renown (being at the same time under a strict and strong garrison put over them by the Parliament, the King in prison, and all their hopes desperate), passed a public act and declaration against the Covenant, with such invincible arguments of the illegality, wickedness, and perjury contained in it, that no man of the contrary opinion, nor the Assembly of the Divines, which then sat at Westminster, ever ventured to make any answer to it; nor is it, indeed, to be answered, but must remain to the world's end as a monument of the learning, courage, and

loyalty of that excellent place against the highest malice and tyranny that was ever exercised in or over any nation.' It was impossible, however, for the University or Colleges permanently to withstand the authority of Parliament, whose demands increased with the growing fanaticism of its leading spirits. At first, University dignitaries and holders of College endowments were asked generally whether they would submit; but afterwards they were required to subscribe, not only the Negative Oath, but the 'Engagement,' pledging the signatories to a form of Government without a King or a House of Lords. Several eminent men, including Reynolds, who had taken all the former tests, resigned their offices rather than submit to this; but it does not seem to have been strictly or universally applied. Still, a summary expulsion of contumacious officials took place: ten Heads of Colleges were ejected; most of the Professors and Canons of Christ Church shared the same fate, and were replaced, often by excellent successors, under orders from the Visitors. No exact list of 'submissions' and 'expulsions' can now be made out, but the evidence preserved in the 'Visitors' Register,' which has come down to us, leads to the conclusion that their numbers were nearly equal, amounting in each case to four hundred or five hundred, and spread over several years.

The later records of this great Visitation are somewhat obscure, but it is difficult to resist the conclusion that it was deliberately moderated, until it finally collapsed, by the friendly influence of Cromwell. That crafty political schemer but true-hearted Englishman, who shrank not from regicide or massacre, yet loved to indulge in politic acts of clemency, and who veiled under the jargon of Puritanical cant the far-sighted aims of a statesman, clearly discerned the importance of conciliating one of the few centres of independent thought which had survived the Puritan Revolution, and of preserving one of the few solid fragments of English society which the Commonwealth had left standing. While the first set of Visitors was engaged in its work, inquisitorial, judicial, and administrative, Cromwell visited Oxford in state, with

Fairfax, on May 17, 1649. Notwithstanding the recent execution of the King, they were cordially welcomed, and received a D.C.L. degree. They dined at Magdalen, played bowls on the College green, had supper in the Bodleian Library, and attended University sermons at St. Mary's Church. On this occasion Cromwell, addressing the University authorities on behalf of himself and Fairfax, professed his respect for the interests of learning, and assured them of his desire to promote these interests for the sake of the Commonwealth. Nor were these vain words: Fairfax had already shown his partiality for the University when the City was in his power, and Cromwell, becoming Chancellor in January 1650, gave it substantial proofs of his favour. Like Archbishop Laud, he presented it with a collection of manuscripts; like Henry VIII., he defended it against the spoliation designed by the Barebones Parliament, and supported by Milton himself. It was by Cromwell that men like Thomas Goodwin and John Owen were introduced into Oxford, the first as President of Magdalen, the second as Dean of Christ Church. These men, with John Conant of Exeter, did much to reconcile the new settlement with ancient traditions, and it has been well said that, when the discipline re-established by them was abolished, amidst the orgies of Charles II.'s return, it was not the discipline of Laud that took its place. The Board of Visitors was twice reconstituted, and lingered on till 1658, but its later history deserves little notice. Owen was appointed Vice-Chancellor by Cromwell in 1652, and placed at the head of a Commission to execute all the Chancellor's official powers. This Commission was soon merged into a new Board of Visitors, which, in its turn, was reconstituted by Cromwell as Protector. The later Visitors were nearly all resident dignitaries; and, while this was a safeguard against innovations dictated by ignorance, it naturally produced an insensible reaction. Having done its real work, the Visitation was beginning to perish of inanition when Cromwell resigned the Chancellorship in 1657. Under Richard Cromwell, his successor, the University gradually

recovered its independence, and became impatient of being nursed and schooled by a meddling select committee of its own members. As its Convocation alleged, 'Visitors residing upon the place did rather nourish and foment than appease differences'—the more so as they sometimes acted as judges on their own causes. At last, in 1658, the Visitors ceased to sit; and it is a significant fact that it is not known how their commission was terminated, or whether it was terminated at all. By this time, however, it was beginning to be manifest that, after all, the old order in Church and State was regretted by a majority of the people, and that England was almost tired of Puritan despotism. Parliament itself had virtually established an amended Monarchy, with a new House of Lords, and the army alone had prevented Cromwell from assuming the Crown. No one was so well aware as he of the revulsion in popular sentiment, calling for a revival of the institutions so hastily demolished, and his prescient mind foreboded, if it did not actually foresee, the coming restoration of the Stuarts.

The first presage of this event was the news brought to Oxford, on February 13, 1660, that a 'free Parliament,' or Convention, was about to be assembled. The effect produced by it on the Oxford world is graphically depicted by Anthony Wood:—

'The scene of all things is now changed, and alteration made in the countenances, actions, manners and words of all men. Those that for these twelve years last past had governed and carried all things in a manner at their pleasure, looked discontented, plucked their hats over their eyes, and were much perplexed, foreseeing that their being here must inevitably vanish. Those that had laid under a cloud for several years behind appear with cheerful looks, while others that had then flourished drooped away or withdrew themselves privately. . . . The Common Prayer-Book and surplice were restored in every church and chapel, and the service that had been lately practised, viz., a Psalm or two, two chapters, and a prayer of the priest's own making, with a little more, laid aside. All tokens of monarchy that were

lately defaced or obscured in the University were also restored or new furbished over, and whatsoever was as yet fit to be introduced many did not spare to effect, and some, to outrun and overdo the law, before the King and Parliament had commanded or put it in force.' Yet historical justice compels us to acknowledge that Oxford had neither been depopulated nor ill-governed under the Commonwealth. On the contrary, the Academical population was already larger than it had been in the reign of James I., and one fact alone is sufficient to show that it was not devoid of intellectual life. While the Visitation was still in progress, Oxford was the scene of those meetings which entitle it to claim an almost equal share with London in the foundation of the Royal Society. We learn from Dr. Wallis, an original member of that Society, that scientific conferences had been held weekly in London, so early as 1645, by a small company of *savants*, including himself, Dr. Wilkins, afterwards Warden of Wadham, and Dr. Goddard, afterwards Warden of Merton. In the early days of the Commonwealth, these three removed to Oxford, and there continued to meet, as before, at the lodgings of Sir William Petty, or Dr. Wilkins, or Robert Boyle, who afterwards joined them, with such colleagues as Dr. Bathurst and Sir Christopher Wren, of whom Evelyn speaks as 'that miracle of a youth,' 'that rare and early prodigy of universal science.' Meanwhile, as Wallis tells us, 'those meetings in London continued, and after the King's return, in 1660, were increased with the accession of divers worthy and honourable persons,' who, together with their Oxford associates, afterwards constituted the Royal Society. Assuredly Oxford was not at its worst in the days of Cromwell. Clarendon himself reluctantly admits that, although such a reign of barbarism as he describes to have followed the Visitation would naturally have extirpated both learning and religion, yet, 'by God's wonderful blessing, the goodness and richness of that soil could not be made barren by all that stupidity and negligence.' Instead thereof, he continues, 'it yielded a harvest of extraordinary

good and sound knowledge in all parts of learning ; and many who were wickedly introduced applied themselves to the study of good learning and the practice of virtue, and had inclination to that duty and obedience they had never been taught ; so that when it pleased God to bring King Charles the Second back to his throne, he found that University . . . abounding in excellent learning, and devoted to duty and obedience little inferior to what it was before its desolation.'

With these words of Clarendon we may fitly conclude our brief review of the stormiest episode in University history.

### III

THE Restoration of Charles II. ushered in an age of degeneracy for Oxford University which lasted for more than a century. Of course there was a fresh Visitation ; but eight of the new Visitors had held offices under the late ' usurpation,' as it was now to be called, and though a restitution of expelled Royalists was the main purpose of their commission, so few appeared to claim it that most of the Fellows elected under the Commonwealth were allowed to keep their places. More important than any personal changes was the Royal letter re-establishing all the statutes and regulations in force during the last reign, including the oaths introduced under James I. This was followed by the Act of Uniformity, passed in 1662, and containing a provision, but lately repealed, which required every College Fellow on his election to make, before the Vice-Chancellor, a declaration of conformity to the Liturgy of the Church of England. With this Act, as has been well said, not merely the reign but the very being of the Puritans in the Universities came to an end. Thenceforward, Oxford became more effectually than ever a seminary of the Anglican clergy and country gentry ; but there was no violent break in the continuity of its corporate life, and the University, so long the battle-ground of rival parties in the State, enjoyed comparative repose throughout Charles II.'s inglorious reign. Anthony Wood, however, Royalist though he was, soon found reason

to deplore both the laxity of manners and the dearth of students. Writing in 1677, he puts the question: 'Why doth solid and serious Learning decline, and few or none follow it now in the University?' In his answer he divides the blame pretty equally between the alehouses, of which there were said to be above 270 in Oxford, the newly-established 'coffee-houses,' and the 'common chambers,' by which he means what are now known as common-rooms. Writing in 1682, he attributes the decline in the number of students to three causes. The first is the constant expectation of a Parliament, and the fear of being turned out to make room for members of both Houses. The second is (in his own words) that 'all those that we call Whigs, and side with the Parliament, will not send their sons, for fear of their being Tories.' The last is that, like the Episcopal Bench, the University labours under the suspicion of a leaning towards Popery.

Of these reasons, the first two were not ill-founded. When the plague was at its height, in September 1665, a Parliament was actually held at Oxford, and passed the Five Mile Act, which prohibited Dissenting ministers from teaching in schools, or settling within five miles of any city or borough, under a penalty of 40*l.* The 'Oxford Gazette,' afterwards transformed into the 'London Gazette,' which has lasted to our own times, was first published during this visit. The King remained in Oxford for the winter, lodging, as usual, at Christ Church; while the Queen was accommodated at Merton, residing in the very rooms where her mother-in-law, Henrietta Maria, held her Court during the Civil War. The University was justly scandalised by the fact of rooms at Merton being also assigned to Miss Stuart, afterwards Duchess of Richmond, and Barbara Villiers, Lady Castlemaine, who there gave birth to her son, the Duke of Grafton. Sixteen years afterwards, in the spring of 1681, Charles II. opened the last Parliament ever held at Oxford. Like his father, he regarded the University as a stronghold of loyalty, and supposed that Whig members would there be subjected to influences under which they might be deterred from passing the Exclusion Bill, directed



against the succession of his brother, the Duke of York. Macaulay tells us that he feared an outbreak of revolutionary violence if the Parliament should be held at Westminster; and though at Oxford there was no such danger, he journeyed thither surrounded by his guards of horse and foot. The Exclusionist members were escorted by hosts of armed tenants and retainers; so that, as Macaulay says, the meeting at Oxford resembled that of a Polish Diet rather than of an English Parliament. Some of the Schools, as before, were fitted up for the Lords, and the Convocation House for the Commons. The session lasted but a week. In spite of unexpected concessions from the King, the majority proved hopelessly refractory; whereupon the Parliament was suddenly dissolved by the King in person, who had quietly put the crown and robes into a sedan-chair, got into it himself, and taken both Houses by surprise. After this performance he is reported to have exclaimed: 'Now am I King of England, and was not before.' As two out of five Parliaments summoned by Charles II. had met in Oxford, the fear of another suspension of University studies was natural; but it was never realised, for he took care to hold no Parliament at all during the last three years of his reign.

The spread of Toryism at Oxford was an undoubted fact, and its principles were dogmatically affirmed by the University, in the very year after this event, in a fit of servile loyalty evoked by the disclosure of the Rye House Plot. On July 21, 1683, the University Convocation passed a decree formally condemning the doctrine that resistance to a king is lawful; which doctrine it reduced to six propositions, expressly stated to have been culled from the works of Milton, Baxter, and Goodwin. One of the condemned propositions, which now reads like a truism, was as follows:—'There lies no obligation upon Christians to passive obedience, when the prince commands anything against the laws of our country.' This decree in favour of passive obedience was publicly burned, in 1709, by order of the House of Lords. It is fair, however, to remember that it also contained a solemn anathema against

other heresies, mostly founded on the despotic principles of Hobbes's 'Leviathan,' thereby anticipating the verdict of the country in 1688. The expulsion of Locke from Christ Church, in the following year, by direct order of the King, was a fit sequel to an Academical declaration of non-resistance, and shows that he, no less than Henry VIII., regarded the University as a potent instrument of his Royal will. Macaulay, indeed, regards the power of both the Universities as having reached its height during the latter part of the seventeenth century, and that of Oxford had been strenuously exerted on the side of the Crown. It was characteristic of James II. to strain its well-tried loyalty to breaking-point, and he was doubtless encouraged in his fatuous designs by the singular outburst of martial ardour in the University upon the news of Monmouth's rebellion. His mistake was that he shared the impression which Anthony Wood describes as prevalent, and interpreted the effusive Toryism of the gownsmen as implying a leaning towards Popery. With that strange ignorance of his countrymen which ultimately proved his ruin, he proceeded to use the dispensing power without stint for the purpose of dislodging the Church of England from the position secured to it at the Reformation, and gradually restoring the supremacy of the ancient faith. A new Court of Ecclesiastical Commission was set up, and soon declared war against both Universities, whose submission appears to have been taken for granted. Having already nominated Massey, a Papist, as Dean of Christ Church, and having a ready tool in Obadiah Walker, Master of University, the infatuated King seriously meditated the conversion of the University. As the army was to be Romanised by granting commissions to Papist officers, and the municipal corporations by cancelling their charters and appointing Papist mayors, so the University and Colleges were to be reclaimed through Papist Heads and Fellows. The brunt of the battle was borne, as is well known, by Magdalen College, on which the first experiment was made, and the record of its manful resistance to James II.'s outrageous violence is part of English history.

The Presidentship of Magdalen had become vacant in March, 1687. Farmer, a Papist of notoriously bad character, and statutablely ineligible, was recommended for the office by a peremptory Royal mandamus. The Fellows, supported by their Visitor, took their stand upon the College statutes, and, after vainly petitioning the King to withdraw his command, elected Hough, one of their own body, to whom no exception could be taken. They were summoned before the new Court of Ecclesiastical Commission, over which the infamous Jefferies presided; the election was annulled, and the King issued a new mandate in favour, not of Farmer, but of Parker, Bishop of Oxford, a man after the King's own heart. James came to Oxford in person, on September 4, 1687, to enforce compliance, probably imagining that members of an University which had embraced the doctrine of passive obedience would not scruple to break their oaths at his bidding. To his surprise, they stood upon their constitutional rights and duties, braved all his threats of punishment, and, after some feints of submission or compromise, held out until they were forcibly dispossessed by a Royal Commission. True to his implacable character, James had insisted, not only on their submission, but on a retraction of their errors and a confession of their guilt; the Ecclesiastical Commission now proceeded to declare them incapable of Church preferment. Having admitted several Popish Fellows and Demies at the King's dictation, Parker died; whereupon James appointed Bonaventura Giffard, a Papist of the Sorbonne. But the handwriting was already visible on the wall. The acquittal of the Seven Bishops, the spread of open disaffection in the army and navy, the invitation to William of Orange, and the news of his preparations for an expedition, suddenly awakened, not the conscience, but the perceptions, of James. During the month of October 1688, he made desperate efforts to save himself from ruin, giving back the forfeited town charters, recalling Protestant officers who had been cashiered, dissolving the Ecclesiastical Commission, and consulting the Episcopal Bench on the best means of escape from his hopeless position. On their

advice, he addressed letters to the Visitor of Magdalen, reinstating the ejected Fellows. But this act of deathbed repentance came too late. The Fellows were restored, indeed, on October 25; but on November 5 William landed, and less than six weeks later James fled the kingdom.

Considering how gross an outrage had been offered by the last Stuart king to the privileges of the University, and how large a space this outrage filled in the public mind on the eve of the Revolution, we may well marvel that no enthusiasm greeted the Revolution at Oxford. It seems to have been quietly accepted there as an irrevocable fact, rather than welcomed as the consecration of civil and religious liberty. It is true that deputies were sent to salute William on his way to London, and that most of the chief University and College dignitaries signed a pledge to support him in restoring order and liberty. But their adhesion proved to be half-hearted; reactionary tendencies soon manifested themselves: William himself was coldly received when he visited the University in 1695; and within fifteen years after the repulse of James II. at Magdalen, Oxford became a hotbed of Jacobite disaffection, which lasted for two whole generations.

In attempting to ascertain the motives of this reaction, which at first sight appears so unreasonable, we must be on our guard against a common fallacy of our age. Since the French Revolution, when the Rights of Man first became the watchword of progress, and the impulse was given to constitutional reforms by the intolerable sufferings of the labouring-classes, we have become accustomed to seek a democratic source for all revolutionary movements, and to assume that advocates of Liberal measures receive their mandate, if they do not draw their inspiration, from the masses of the people. But in the olden times it was not so. Neither the Reformation, nor the Puritan revolt against the Stuarts, nor the Revolution of 1688, nor even the American Revolution, was essentially popular in its origin, or commanded, in its earlier stages, the sympathy of a majority in the nation. Henry VIII.

could rely on an obsequious Parliament; but he knew well how deeply rooted was the old religion in the hearts of his poorer subjects, including those whom the Dissolution of Monasteries converted into 'sturdy vagrants.' Cromwell ruled by the will of the army, but he would never have submitted his authority to a *plébiscite*. William III. and the first two Georges were supported on the throne by a Whig oligarchy, whose influence preponderated in the governing class, and was guided by leaders of rare sagacity. Civil liberty and religious toleration were not democratic triumphs; they were achieved by a resolute and compact minority, which possessed itself of the Government, and succeeded in maintaining them until they were accepted by the great body of Englishmen as their natural birthright. But even the governing class, then but a fraction of the country, comprised within itself a large Tory element, which, however unwilling to risk another change of dynasty, cherished Jacobite sentiment with marvellous tenacity. This minority was largely represented among the clergymen and country gentlemen who received their education at Oxford. Probably they inherited a traditional High Church partisanship, handed down from the days of the Puritan Visitation; doubtless many of them resented the harsh treatment of the Non-Jurors, while nearly all of them mistrusted the latitudinarian opinions attributed to William III., openly patronised by Whig statesmen, and partially embodied in the Comprehension Bill. It must be confessed that, with the doubtful exception of Anne, none of the four sovereigns who succeeded James II. were qualified to inspire feelings of personal loyalty; nor is it easy to determine whether George I. and II. or the two Pretenders were the less worthy of the devotion manifested on their behalf. At all events, however Oxford Jacobitism may have been engendered, and whether it was in the nature of a profound conviction or of an inveterate fashion, it was not only shared by 'dens' and students, but also by the noisier section of Oxford citizens; it was the one important feature in the external history of the University during the first half

of the last century, and, like Scotch Jacobitism, it retained a sort of poetical life up to a still later period.

We can but glance at the evidence which all but justifies the statement that, 'during the Hanoverian rule, Oxford became the Jacobite capital of England, against London.' Locke is said to have warned King William that, unless the Universities were reformed again, the work of the Revolution 'would all soon go back.' Queen Anne, being suspected of Toryism, was heartily received at Oxford on two occasions; but even during this period of Whig ascendancy, in the earlier part of her reign, Burnet concurred with the antiquary Hearne, a fanatical Jacobite, in regarding the University as honey-combed with High Church bigotry, which broke out into a flame on the trial of Dr. Sacheverel. It was now that the University decree of 1683, in favour of passive obedience, was publicly burned by order of the House of Lords. Under the Administration of Harley and St. John, Oxford paraded its Toryism without disguise and the peaceful accession of the Elector of Hanover was received by gownsmen with sullen disappointment. The Tory Democracy of the University now took refuge in libels, disloyal toasts, and offensive lampoons, while the Tory mob of the City disported itself in wrecking Dissenting chapels. On the other hand, a 'Constitution Club' was founded by a few Whig graduates. The attempt of this Club to celebrate the King's birthday in 1715 led to a serious riot. The University again incurred the censure of the House of Lords, and the Government, in view of the Scotch rebellion, took decisive measures by sending down a military force to Oxford, and proclaiming martial law there. It was this act of severity which an Oxford wit contrasted with the King's recent present of a library to Cambridge in lines which, together with the Cambridge re-partee, have become historical.

King George, observing with judicious eyes  
The state of both his Universities,  
To Oxford sent a troop of horse—for why?  
That learned body wanted loyalty.

To Cambridge, books he sent, as well discerning  
How much that loyal body wanted learning.

The King to Oxford sent a troop of horse,  
For Tories own no argument but force ;  
With equal care, to Cambridge books he sent,  
For Whigs admit no force but argument.

But the Oxford Whigs long continued to be subjected to Academical persecution by the dominant Tory faction, and it was seriously contemplated by the Government to introduce a Bill suspending the constitution of both Universities, and placing the appointment to all offices therein, for the next fifteen years, in the hands of the Crown. Neither George I. nor George II. ever deigned to visit Oxford, well knowing that covert Jacobitism was the prevailing creed of the University, where it sometimes broke out into violent demonstrations, as when, after the withdrawal of Walpole's Excise Bill, the University bells were rung, disorderly revels lasted for three nights, and the healths of Ormond, Bolingbroke, and James III. were publicly drunk round the bonfires. Even after the suppression of the Rebellion in 1745 it was not extinct, and a congratulatory address from the University on the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was rejected by the King with disdain. By this time, however, it had ceased to be formidable, betraying itself chiefly in University sermons and elections to the Chancellorship. Though Pitt denounced it in the House of Commons so late as 1754, it seems to have been sensibly checked by the patriotic enthusiasm called forth during the closing years of George II.'s reign, and to have been finally quenched by the accession of George III.

That University studies and University morals were at a low ebb during the eighteenth century admits of no doubt whatever. Too much stress, indeed, has been laid on the evidence of Gibbon, who became a Gentleman-Commoner of Magdalen in his fifteenth year, and was constantly making it the starting-point of pleasure-excursions. But this evidence is substantially confirmed by that of witnesses differing widely from each other in their character and Academical experience

—by Swift and Defoe, Addison and Gray, Johnson and John Wesley, Lord Malmesbury, Lord Eldon, and Lord Chesterfield, the last of whom speaks of the University as ‘known only for its treasonable spirit.’ The well-known strictures of Adam Smith are chiefly directed against the system of teaching; and, in spite of many honourable exceptions, it is certain that the three generations which followed the Revolution were the Dark Age of Oxford University. Several reasons may be suggested for this decay of education and learning in Oxford, while mathematical studies were vigorously cultivated in Cambridge, and had already contributed to English science the greatest name in its illustrious history. One of these reasons, however, is sufficient, and it is one which throws a flood of light on a theory, once happily exploded, but now boldly revived. If, as some high authorities maintain, the scarcity of genius among us is mainly due to our students being harassed by examinations, then Oxford under Queen Anne and the first Georges ought to have been a very Paradise of what is now called ‘mature study and original research’; for the old statutable exercises, which tested knowledge in former ages, had fallen into disuse, the examination for the B.A. degree was little more than a mockery, and there was no Honours List at all. Yet this was the age in which Oxford rendered the minimum of service, not only to learning and science, but to political and national life, being fairly distanced in the performance of its highest functions by the sister University of Cambridge, which had been less disturbed by politics, and wisely adopted the examination system at an earlier period.

It must not be forgotten, however, that when this intellectual and spiritual torpor was at its worst—in the first years of George II.’s reign—the Methodist Revival owed its origin to Oxford. Though Oxford had just produced the ablest of its orthodox theologians in Bishop Butler, the influence of practical Christianity in the University had been on the decline ever since the Restoration, and was never weaker than during the long twenty years’ peace under Walpole. Walpole himself



was no unworthy representative of the moral and religious principles which then prevailed in the common-rooms of Oxford. Notwithstanding their boisterous sympathy with the High Church party in politics, many senior members of the University, both clerical and lay, secretly leaned to Rationalism, and the Deism which came in with the Revolution of 1688 became rife again under the Georges. Of course, it was discountenanced by the authorities. In the year 1730, three students were expelled for holding Deistical tenets; several heads of Colleges issued a joint notice censuring the spread of Deism among the students, and the Vice-Chancellor, in a '*programma*,' solemnly warned tutors and undergraduates against literature calculated to disturb Christian faith. It was about the same year, and in this unpromising soil, teeming with High Church prejudices, saturated with mere worldliness, and now infected with Deism, that the seeds of Methodism were sown at Oxford by the two Wesleys, Whitefield, Hervey, and a very few associates.

Of this little band, John Wesley at once became the acknowledged leader. Their earliest meetings were held for the simple purpose of reading the Greek Testament, and encouraging one another in study and good works. From the first they adopted a strict code of religious observance—which some of them carried to the length of asceticism—and made a practice of receiving the Holy Communion weekly—in that age, a rare proof of religious devotion. But within a year their sympathies widened, and took a philanthropic direction. To John Wesley and his fellows the essence of the movement, soon to be called Methodism, was not so much devotional as practical—not so much the propagation of a new creed, as charitable ministrations and the moral salvation of human souls. They strove to rescue young students from evil company, relieved poor families, taught in schools, and visited the inmates of the workhouse and gaol. Strange to say, this brought unmerited ridicule upon them, which may have been also provoked by the eccentric demeanour of the more ardent; but they persevered, and the impression which they produced

was quite out of proportion to their numbers, always insignificant. Their enthusiasm, however, was steadily discouraged by the College authorities, and Methodism was short-lived in Oxford. The history of its activity virtually ends with the ill-advised mission of John and Charles Wesley to Georgia in 1735. The Oxford Methodists could not survive, as an independent sect, without the presence and example of their leader; and, within three years of his departure, the communion destined to exercise so great an influence on both sides of the Atlantic had dwindled to impotence in the City which had been at once the cradle of the movement and the stronghold of opposition to it. Still, individuals continued to be suspected of Methodism, and so late as 1768 the Vice-Chancellor expelled six Methodist students from St. Edmund Hall as disturbers of the peace, notwithstanding the protest of the Principal. This high-handed act was actually defended by Dr. Johnson, at a time when University discipline was shamefully lax, gambling, blasphemy, and drunkenness being condoned as venial offences. After this we hear no more of Methodism at Oxford. Nor is it hard to understand why it failed to command acceptance there after its first conquests, since it appealed more and more to the religious emotions of the less educated classes, abandoning any attempt to satisfy the reason of inquirers.

Nearly a century elapsed before another wave of religious excitement—this time a reactionary wave—passed over the still and apathetic surface of University society at Oxford. It was less important than Methodism in its purely moral aspect, since it was far less popular and practical, leaving no such profound impression on the religious life of the nation. On the other hand, it sprang from deeper political causes, and exercised a more powerful influence on Anglican theology, since it wore a more scholar-like garb, was more attractive to cultivated and imaginative minds, allied itself with the romantic, speculative, and historical spirit of the age, and purported to be essentially constructive, or reconstructive. The great Neo-Catholic Revival of the nineteenth century was set on

foot by a select body of Oxford men, with the deliberate purpose of defending the Church and the Christianity of England against the dominant Liberalism which had carried the Reform Act, and openly avowed its Erastian principles. The University of Oxford was the national centre for such a reaction, and it was so intimately identified with that University that it came to be generally known as 'The Oxford Movement.' It took its rise in the Common-Room of Oriel College, of which Pusey and Keble were Fellows; but its real leader was John Henry Newman. As Wesley's sympathies were originally with High Church doctrines, so Newman's were originally with Evangelical doctrines, and it was not until after his return from Italy, in 1833, that he brought out, in concert with Hurrell Froude, the first of that series of 'Tracts for the Times' from which his party derived its familiar name of Tractarians. This is not the place to review the distinctive tenets of that party; suffice it to say, that it contemptuously rejected the name of 'Protestant,' and treated the Reformation with the scantiest respect, yet emphatically disavowed allegiance to Rome. Newman's professed object was to revive the usages and doctrines of the primitive Church; to co-operate, indeed, with the Church of Rome, but to keep aloof from its pernicious corruptions; to establish the catholicity of the Anglican Church, but, above all, to hold the *via media* laid down by its founders. This ideal was soon to be shattered; but, while it lasted, it produced a profound impression on the younger graduates, predisposed to rebel against the self-complacent and lifeless orthodoxy which then ruled, both in the Oxford lecture-rooms and in the University pulpit. Like Methodism, the Tractarian movement spread from Oxford over the whole country; but, unlike Methodism, it long retained Oxford as its central base of operations, and became an intellectual fashion of the University. Still, the influence of Tractarianism over Oxford thought must not be exaggerated. It fascinated many subtle and imaginative minds of a high order, it gathered into itself much of the spiritual life of the University, and allied itself with much latent discontent

which had little real affinity to it. But there were many robust intellects and earnest hearts which it not only failed to reach, but stirred into hostility. When Tract XC. shocked the moral sense of most Churchmen, and the Bishops declared against the movement, the power of Newman sensibly waned, and he resigned the Vicarage of St. Mary's, in 1843, under an impulse of despondency, on failing to dissuade a young friend from conversion to Romanism. Two years later he was himself received into the Church of Rome, the real tendency of his teaching was revealed, and, though some devoted adherents followed him, the progress of the Neo-Catholic Revival was suddenly arrested. But the 'Oxford Movement' had left its mark on the English Church, as well as on the University, in the widespread restoration of churches, in the improvement of church services, and in a greater energy of practical religion. After a period of suspended animation, it took a new departure under the name of Ritualism; but it had then lost its Academical character, and ceased to draw its inspiration from the University of Oxford.

Two episodes, and one sequel, of the Oxford Movement deserve a brief notice, since they illustrate the notable influence of the University on the Church of England during the last fifty years. The one was the controversy arising out of the appointment of Dr. Hampden to the Regius Professorship of Divinity in 1836, followed by a vote of censure on him in the Oxford Convocation, and culminating in the protest, supported by thirteen Bishops, against his nomination to the see of Hereford in 1847. The other was the solemn condemnation of Mr. Ward by the University in 1845, a year or two after Dr. Pusey had been suspended from preaching in the University pulpit. In both these cases, the University assumed the position of a quasi-Ecclesiastical Commission, and its jurisdiction was recognised, not, indeed, by the Ministers of the Crown, still less by the English people, but certainly by a majority of the Anglican clergy. Thirty years after his own suspension, Dr. Pusey, now regarded as a champion of orthodoxy, came forward, with certain other Doctors of Divinity,

to bring a charge of heresy against Mr. Jowett of Balliol, the Regius Professor of Greek, who had contributed to the volume called 'Essays and Reviews.' This volume contained seven articles, five of which were contributed by eminent members of Oxford University, and was generally received as a prelude to a new Oxford Movement in the direction of Rationalism. While proceedings were taken in the Ecclesiastical Courts against two of its authors, the suit against Mr. Jowett was instituted in the Chancellor's Court, the jurisdiction of which in spiritual matters was affirmed by the judgment delivered on February 6, 1863, though a decision on the merits of the case was skilfully avoided. A somewhat undignified controversy followed, and greatly disturbed the peace of the University, on the question of increasing the very meagre endowment of the Greek Professorship—a measure which Dr. Pusey and his adherents opposed, on the sole ground that it would strengthen the position of the existing Professor. This controversy agitated the Church as well as the University, but it was at last settled by a compromise, on February 18, 1865, to the satisfaction of even the High Church residents, who no longer cared to please the non-resident clergy by perpetuating an apparent injustice which damaged their own credit with the abler students. Soon afterwards, the supremacy of the Conservative Party in the constituency was decisively established by the defeat of Mr. Gladstone, and two fruitful sources of Academical discord were removed within a few months of each other. Since 1865, a tacit *concordat* has prevailed between the two great schools of thought in Oxford, and a philosophical toleration of opinion has superseded the intolerant dogmatism, not confined to one party in the Church, which had its origin in the Neo-Catholic Revival.

We have dwelt at some length on these religious movements, because the place of the University in English history since the accession of George III. must be mainly determined, not by its connection with Imperial politics, but rather by its influence on the opinion of the governing classes. We may seek

in vain for any memorable events in its external life during the reigns of George III. and George IV., unless it be the visit of the Allied Sovereigns in 1814; and even the records of its domestic life during this long period are meagre and trivial in the extreme. It is right, however, to notice the new Examination Statute of 1800, and the subsequent introduction of the class-system, which, in reforming and invigorating the methods of classical study at Oxford, sensibly enriched the intellectual life of the country. The system thus instituted has been maintained in principle ever since, though it was transformed afresh in 1850, only to be amended and extended by a series of supplementary measures, which is by no means completed. Whatever be its shortcomings, the services rendered by Oxford to Church and State in the nineteenth century have been greater, beyond comparison, than it rendered in the eighteenth, and the improvement in Academical education has raised in an equal degree the standard of Academical learning.

Still more important have been the changes effected in the constitution of the University and Colleges, within the last forty years, by the direct action of the Legislature. Nearly two centuries had elapsed since the Puritan Visitation, when Parliament was again moved to undertake the work of University reform, and a Royal Commission was issued in 1850, 'for the purpose of enquiring into the state, discipline, studies and revenues' of the University and Colleges. The report of this Commission of Enquiry was followed in 1854 by an Act of Parliament, which constituted a fresh Executive Commission to remodel the collegiate system. In 1872, a new wave of democratic sentiment impelled the Government of Mr. Gladstone to issue a third Commission, to enquire specially into the application of University and College revenues. Finally, in 1877 the Government of Lord Beaconsfield carried a Bill empowering a fourth Commission to make a large provision out of College revenues for University purposes. In the meantime, after a contest prolonged over nine years, the complete abolition of University Tests, already reduced by the Act of 1854, was brought about by an Act passed in 1871, and

due to a persistent movement chiefly emanating from the Universities themselves.

The frequency of these Parliamentary interventions is a significant feature of University history during the reign of Queen Victoria, and they have been supplemented by a restless activity of innovation within the University itself. Whatever may be said against some of the measures thus initiated by successive Commissions and successive groups of University legislators, their general result has certainly been to strengthen and popularise the University as a national institution. Instead of being administered by the old Hebdomadal Board, consisting solely of the Heads of Colleges with the two Proctors, it is now practically governed by an elective Council and a vigorous deliberative assembly, comprising all resident Masters of Arts. The monopoly of Colleges has been finally broken down, not only by the revival of private Halls, but also by the full recognition of non-collegiate students. All University degrees, except those in Divinity, and all College emoluments, with trifling exceptions, are now thrown open to candidates without distinction of creed, and, in most cases, without restriction on the place of birth or education. Instead of being confined to classics and mathematics, the University curriculum and examination system have been so extended as to include all branches of Natural Science, Modern History, Law, Theology, and Oriental Languages. A large appropriation of College revenues has been made for the endowment of Professorships; and though it has not been found so easy to provide the new Professors with audiences, the educational function of the University is at least redeemed from the reproach of being merged in mere College tuition. The University Library, Museums, and other institutions for the common benefit of students, have received a vigorous development. With the almost total abolition of clerical privileges, the clerical spirit of the University has been largely tempered, and, though its religious character has not been impaired by the admission of Nonconformists, it has ceased to be a hotbed of theological controversy. It

is not too much to say that within the last thirty-five years the University has made greater progress than in any previous century: Oxford science has once more begun to command the respect of Europe; the professoriate has received an accession of illustrious names; and the work of College tutors, instead of being the temporary vocation of Fellows waiting for livings, has gradually placed itself on the footing of a regular profession. Instead of drying up the bounty of founders, as had been confidently predicted, the reforms of late years have apparently caused the stream of benefactions to flow with renewed abundance. Nearly all the older Colleges have extended their buildings, mostly by the aid of private munificence, a new College has been founded, two Nonconformist Colleges for post-graduate study have been transferred to Oxford, and the aggregate number of undergraduates in residence has been nearly doubled within forty years. Nor is the educational influence of the University during this period to be measured solely by its internal growth. By means of Local Examinations, instituted thirty years ago, it has indirectly assumed, together with the University of Cambridge, the inspection of middle-class education throughout England. By another system of examinations, conducted in concert with the sister University, it has largely increased its control over the higher class of public schools, whose studies had long been regulated by the standard established at the Universities. By the organisation of Academical lectures in populous centres, it has extended the spirit of its teaching to classes who cannot afford the expense of prolonged residence at Oxford itself. But this is not all. We must also remember how vast a number of those who govern the educational movement, directly or indirectly, have themselves passed under the discipline of Oxford or Cambridge. Not only the Head Masters of all the public schools, but the great body of clergymen and of barristers, all the Bishops, and a majority of the Judges, are *alumni* of English or Irish Universities. By virtue of their connection with the Church, especially, the two older Universities are responsible for the guidance of



National Education to an extent which it is hardly possible to exaggerate. It is clergymen there educated who not only are the sole representatives of learning in most country parishes, but manage the great majority of parochial schools which are not under School Boards. Nearly the whole staff of the Education Office itself, as well as that of the Civil Service Commission, has been recruited from Oxford and Cambridge, and graduates of those Universities fill the highest positions in the administrative and political service of the State in a ratio out of all proportion to their numbers, even as compared with the wealthier classes of society. But perhaps the most potent of all educational agencies is what is known as the Press. If it could be ascertained how largely English journalism and periodical literature are indebted to Oxford and Cambridge men for their present characteristics, and how largely English habits of thought are formed by English journalism and periodical literature, it would furnish a crowning proof of the unseen but all-pervading influence exercised by those Universities on National Education.

Such has been the place of Oxford University in the past history of England—a place which it has mainly owed to its own inherent vitality, but which has been secured to it by the policy of successive Governments, and which it has shared with Cambridge alone among the non-political institutions of the country. To forecast the place which it may be destined to fill in the future history of England is beyond our aim and beyond our skill. That it has survived three civil wars, the dissolution of monasteries, the shock of the Reformation, and the levelling reign of Puritanism, is no proof that it will be spared by the utilitarian spirit of modern Democracy. It may be that its endowments will excite the cupidity, and its privileges will excite the jealousy, of classes disposed to believe that man does indeed live by bread alone, and that it will be smothered by an undergrowth of provincial Colleges, miscalled Universities, like those which have sprung up in America. It may be, on the other hand, that it will be wisely preserved, as a regulating force of higher value than ever, in a new system

of National Education, at once the healthiest school of social equality and the purest fountain of intellectual honour. What is certain is, that it cannot be again what it was in bygone ages. Nevermore shall the wayworn student, his wallet empty, but his soul filled with a divine thirst for knowledge, 'look down upon the city of Roger Bacon and of Ockham with the passionate reverence of the pilgrim, with the joy of the miner who has found his gold.' Nevermore shall judgments of the University be cited with respect in the Councils of Popes, or invoked by Kings to ratify great acts of State. Nevermore shall its Colleges be converted into officers' quarters, and its public Schools into legislative chambers. And yet it is possible—nay, it is even probable, that, having ceased to be an engine of the Church or an engine of the State, the occasional seat of Government, or the last asylum of a disloyal faction, it may continue to exercise a power more subtle but no less profound, as part and parcel of the national life. Not only the possession of unique libraries, collections, and architectural treasures, but the sacred memories of 700 years, the prestige of an influence which has so deeply moulded both English thought and English character, the recent and manifold extension of that influence through new associations with the English people—these are attributes which no revolutionary decree can either destroy or create, and which true statesmanship will know how to cherish, whatever force may henceforth be dominant in the shifting world of English politics.

VI

ELECTION ADDRESSES



TO THE ELECTORS OF THE BOROUGH OF  
WOODSTOCK (1868)

GENTLEMEN,—I have been invited by an influential body of Electors, whom I believe to represent a majority among you, to come forward as a Liberal Candidate for the Borough of Woodstock. Having been unable to attend the meeting from which that invitation proceeded, I feel it right to lose no time in laying before you a full statement of my political views, and I shall take an early opportunity of ascertaining, by personal conference, the sentiments of the constituency.

I am, and have ever been, a sincere Liberal. It is to successive triumphs of Liberal principles over selfish interests and prejudices, mis-called 'Conservative,' that we owe our present liberties and social advancement, and it is by the light of these principles that we must be guided in the reforms yet to be accomplished. I welcome the large extension of the franchise effected by the Reform Act of last session, not as the settlement of a troublesome question, but as a measure of justice to classes hitherto jealously excluded from political influence, and as the lever whereby a new power may be brought to bear on legislation. That it was forced upon an unwilling Government by the determined attitude of the people, and that clause after clause, designed to neutralise its effect, was struck out by the ceaseless exertions of the Liberal Party, headed by Mr. Gladstone, is now matter of history. We might well be content to forget the insidious policy which dictated its original form, had not this policy left its mark in the so-called rating-clauses and other vexatious provisions, which must, ere long, be amended.

It will be the first duty of the new constituencies to

employ, resolutely and independently, the power thus placed in their hand. Though I might prefer, in the abstract, a system of open voting, I regard the Ballot as an essential safeguard for the protection of electors, and the necessary accompaniment of Household Suffrage in the present state of society.

Foremost among the questions which await the decision of the Reformed Parliament is that which is now the question of the hour—The Disestablishment of the Irish Church. The injustice of maintaining a Protestant State Church in a community of which a large majority is Roman Catholic was among the earliest of my political convictions, and I rejoice that Mr. Gladstone has not shrunk from challenging the verdict of the country upon it. That verdict cannot be doubtful. Such an institution is manifestly indefensible on principle, and, in my judgment, equally indefensible on grounds of expediency.

It is said that disestablishment will injure the Protestant cause in Ireland—as if the interests of religion could ever be served by wrongful means, and as if Protestantism were too weak to hold its own on the basis of religious equality. It is said that it will fail to extinguish the spirit of Fenianism—as if the object of statesmanship were only to salve over the symptoms of disaffection, instead of removing its deep-seated causes. It is said that it will involve the downfall of the Church of England—as if the Church of England did not depend for its existence on being that which the Protestant Church of Ireland is not, and never has been—a National Church. It is said that it will endanger the foundation of property—as if property had any stronger foundation than Parliamentary enactment, and as if some of the largest private estates in the United Kingdom were not derived from the endowments of monasteries dissolved by the will of Parliament. I believe from my heart that an act of righteous conciliation, such as that proposed by Mr. Gladstone, will strengthen and not weaken the legitimate influence of Protestant zeal, will go far to disarm the reasonable discontent

of Irish Catholics, will relieve the Church of England from a scandal which now weighs her down, and will render the proprietary titles of landlords far more secure than is possible so long as they are associated with the odious traditions of Protestant ascendancy. Whatever may be the difficulty of appropriating afresh the surplus revenues of the existing Establishment, after due provision for vested interests, I regard them as a fund of which the State is entitled and bound to dispose for the benefit, and, if possible, with the consent, of the whole Irish population.

Another source of discord in Ireland is the unsatisfactory relation between landlord and tenant. While I cannot recognise the claim for absolute fixity of tenure, I think the Legislature, having regard to the peculiar circumstances of Ireland, ought at least to protect the tenant against capricious eviction by the landlord, and to secure to him the value of unexhausted improvements.

Next to the condition of Ireland, the subject of Education, in the largest sense, appears to me the most urgent of those which call for the earnest consideration of the Liberal Party. Without a more efficient system of popular education, our efforts to grapple with crime, vice, and pauperism, must needs be vain, our place in the scale of nations will surely be lowered, and even our commercial supremacy cannot long be maintained. I hold it to be the duty, as well as the right, of the State to provide for this primary need of the poorer classes, with due respect for religious scruples, but with a paramount regard for the interests of society. If elected to Parliament, I should therefore support any judicious scheme for bringing the means of education within the reach of every child in every parish throughout the country. Such a scheme must, of course, exclude the imposition of vexatious conditions upon the consciences of parents in any school aided by a public grant. It must, at the same time, protect the rising generation against the consequences of parental neglect; and I should not scruple to extend still further the compulsory principle of the Factories and Industrial School Acts.

The education of our higher and middle classes is only second in importance to that of our working classes, and I believe we ought no longer to postpone a thorough revision of our educational institutions, with a view, especially, to a better application of endowments and a more liberal recognition of new branches of knowledge. As a Graduate of the University of Oxford, and as a Fellow of one of its most ancient Colleges, I feel a special interest, and have taken an active part, in recent efforts to assert the national character of our two older Universities. It is my conviction that by throwing open all Academical honours and emoluments to members of all denominations, by reducing the scale of necessary expenses, and by enlarging the course of studies to meet the requirements of the age, a new life may be infused into these noble foundations, hitherto crippled by restrictions and privileges, a new impulse given to our whole system of higher education, and a new bond of union developed in English society by the construction, as it were, of a ladder of merit, reaching from its lowest to its highest grades.

In Foreign Affairs, my voice would ever be for Peace, if not at any price, yet at the price of that menacing or meddling influence, too seldom used on the side of liberty, which depends on the maintenance of great armaments. I can, indeed, imagine circumstances under which it would be the duty of this country, as of old, to arm herself against an aggressor; but such occasions, I am persuaded, will be of less and less frequent occurrence as the rights and interests of people become the mainspring of international policy. In the meantime, I conceive that we shall best maintain friendly relations with foreign Powers, not by disguising our sympathy with the cause of political liberty on the Continent, or the cause of personal freedom in America, but rather by abstaining from entering into engagements which can only serve the purposes of dynastic ambition. I believe that we may effect a vast reduction in the cost of our naval and military establishments without in any degree impairing their efficiency, nor do I despair of seeing the moral power of England exerted



in bringing about a general disarmament and a permanent system of international arbitration.

The question of Church Rates has, I trust, been settled by the adoption of Mr. Gladstone's compromise, though I should have been prepared to abolish that liability without reserve. There are other questions, however, of a more or less similar nature, which need to be dealt with in a like spirit. The secret of their solution is, in my opinion, to be found in a broader assertion of national rights over local or sectarian privileges.

The forthcoming report of the Commission on Trades-Unions will doubtless pave the way for new legislation on the subject. I see but one safe principle on which the law can be founded. We must, on the one hand, give entire freedom of combination to employers and workmen for all purposes not criminal in their nature. On the other hand, we must provide stringent remedies, not only against violent outrages, but against coercion in every form. I feel persuaded that all such difficulties will be approached far more hopefully by a Parliament more directly representing those who have a personal interest in their settlement.

There are other reforms, likely to engage a larger share of Parliamentary attention than heretofore, which I earnestly desire to promote. Such is the reform of our legal procedure, the reform of our public departments, of our municipal organisation, of our charitable endowments, of our Poor-Law administration, of the laws regulating the descent and transfer of land, of the rating system, and of the licensing system. Such, too, is the creation of financial boards, upon which the representatives of the ratepayers may sit with the magistrates, and share the control of county expenditure. Upon all these questions, and especially upon those which immediately affect the material and moral well-being of the people, I should desire to follow the enlightened leadership of Mr. Gladstone, who, above all living statesmen, has given proofs of the will and capacity to subordinate class-interests to national interests, and has been inspired, throughout his

political career, by a genuine sympathy with the feelings and wants of his countrymen.

In conclusion, Gentlemen, I have only to assure you that, if you see fit to return me, I shall enter Parliament under a deep sense of responsibility. I have no professional or commercial objects to promote by obtaining a seat, nor any other personal ambition than to devote myself, heart and soul, to public life. While I have entire faith in Liberal principles, my endeavour, I trust, will ever be to carry them out in a spirit of moderation. In my opinion, the time has come when a higher statesmanship than has directed our national policy since the establishment of Free Trade is urgently required by the country. We have removed some grievances and many abuses, but we have not grappled with the most vital problems of our age. It is my highest aspiration, as it has been my constant aim for years past in the study of politics, to bear a part, however humble, in so great a work. It is this privilege, and this alone, which I now solicit at your hands, fully conscious of its magnitude, but sustained by an earnest hope that, with your encouragement and support, I shall not prove wholly unworthy of the confidence which you may repose in me.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE C. BRODRICK.

Bear Hotel, August 27, 1868.

#### TO THE ELECTORS OF WOODSTOCK (1874)

GENTLEMEN,—An immediate Dissolution of Parliament being announced by Her Majesty's command, I come amongst you once more to ask your support in vindicating Liberal principles and the independence of your Borough.

During the General Election of 1868, I laid before you a full statement of my political views. If I now address you more briefly, it is because I have nothing to retract, and nothing to alter, of what I then deliberately advanced. The

experience of five eventful years has but confirmed my conviction that a Liberal policy is the only policy whereby the power and progress of this, or any other nation, can be permanently maintained. The claim of Mr. Gladstone's Administration to the renewed confidence of the people is founded on no vague professions, but on a series of past achievements which have been equalled by no previous Government in our Parliamentary history. The Irish Church Act, the Irish Land Act, the Elementary Education Act, the Endowed Schools Act, the Act which swept away Religious Tests in the Universities, the Ballot Act, the Trades-Union Act, the Mines Regulation Act, the Judicature Act, the Abolition of Purchase in the Army, the extension of Promotion by Merit to all branches of the Public Service, and the restoration of friendly relations between Great Britain and the United States—these are the enduring monuments of a Liberal policy, under Mr. Gladstone's leadership; and of these measures there is scarcely one which the Conservative Opposition has not exerted itself vigorously to defeat or to mar. It would be too much to say that no defects remain to be amended in some of the Acts which have been passed under this obstructive pressure, or that no mistakes of judgment have been committed in carrying out administrative reforms. But such mistakes, few and slight compared with the great benefits which Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues have conferred upon the country, have been due to no unworthy motives, but rather to an exclusive zeal for the national interest, to guard which is the highest duty of a Liberal Ministry.

In his recent Address to the Electors of Greenwich, Mr. Gladstone has pointed out that, within the last five years, taxes have been remitted to the extent of 12,500,000*l.*, the National Debt has been reduced by more than 20,000,000*l.*, a further saving of 9,000,000*l.* has enabled the Government to purchase the Telegraphs for the State, the 'Alabama' indemnity has been paid out of the revenue, and a surplus of at least 5,000,000*l.* may be anticipated for the coming year.

Out of this surplus, aided by adjustments of existing taxes, he proposes to abolish the Income Tax, and at the same time avows a confident belief that it may be possible to lighten the burdens on articles of popular consumption, and to effect the relief, coupled with the reform, of local taxation. I need hardly say that, having entire faith in Mr. Gladstone's financial ability, I should, if elected, heartily support him in carrying out these beneficent objects.

The other questions indicated by Mr. Gladstone as demanding the early attention of Parliament are—the Municipal Government of the Metropolis, University Reform, the Licensing Laws, the laws respecting the descent, transfer, and occupation of Land, the Game Laws, the laws affecting the relations of Employers and Employed, and the laws which regulate Local Government. The last four of these questions possess a special interest for the constituency of Woodstock, containing, as it does, a very large proportion of agricultural labourers. I shall, therefore, make no apology for quoting at length the statesmanlike and generous language in which Mr. Gladstone speaks of this class :—

‘Of all the changes marking the present day, there is none which I view with more heartfelt satisfaction than the progressive rise of wages in the agricultural districts. I view this rise as the natural and proper, though long-delayed, result of economic laws ; as the removal of something like a national discredit ; as carrying with it a great addition to the stock, never too abundant, of human happiness ; and as a new guarantee for the stability of the Throne and institutions of the country.’

While I adopt every word of this declaration, I venture to go a step further, and to submit that, since unwise legislation has concurred with economic laws in depressing the condition of agricultural labourers, wise legislation may properly concur with economic laws in raising that condition. It is for this reason, and because no class ought to be excluded from representation in the national council, that I desire to see Household Suffrage established in the counties. When

this has been accomplished, Parliament may be expected to deal in a new spirit with the law of Primogeniture and the custom of Entail, with the Game Laws, with the Enclosure Laws, with the law of Landlord and Tenant, with the law of Master and Servant, with the law of Conspiracy, with the system of County and Parish Administration, and with a variety of other questions in which agricultural labourers are nearly concerned.

Holding these convictions, and having a hearty sympathy with all the efforts of agricultural labourers to better their social position by legitimate means, I rely with entire confidence on their united support in the approaching contest. I am, however, no advocate of Socialistic measures, nor will I be party to an agitation whereby class may be set against class. On the contrary, I maintain that farmers as well as labourers, and landlords as well as farmers, have been to some extent the victims of legislative errors in former times; that all have a common interest in developing to the utmost the resources of the land, with due security of tenure; and that, in the end, all will profit by the prosperity which now at last appears to be reaching the home of the labourer.

In conclusion, Gentlemen, I would earnestly impress upon you that union is strength, and that under the protection of the Ballot your votes are your own. Let us combine moderation in speech with unflinching energy in action, remembering that such a contest as ours will be eagerly watched by friends and enemies throughout England, and resolving that nothing said or done on our part shall impair the effect of our victory.

I remain, Gentlemen,  
Your Friend and faithful Servant,  
GEORGE C. BRODRICK.

Merton College, Oxford, Jan. 27, 1874.

TO THE ELECTORS OF THE COUNTY OF MONMOUTH GENTLEMEN,—At a grave crisis in the political history of this country, we respond to a hearty invitation from the Liberals of Monmouthshire, and offer ourselves as candidates for the representation of your county.

Lord Beaconsfield has challenged the verdict of the country on his Foreign Policy, and by that policy his Government must be mainly judged. We condemn its principles, and deplore many of its results. We are not advocates of Peace at any price, but we see nothing but evil in that menacing and meddlesome influence which depends on warlike demonstrations, and has actually involved us of late in two unrighteous, because unnecessary, wars. The question is not, as the Prime Minister would have you believe, whether the 'Imperial character of this realm' shall be maintained. In common with all Liberals, we are prepared to uphold the integrity of the Empire, which Liberal statesmen have done so much to strengthen, by giving the Colonies the privileges of self-government, and by studying to remove every just cause of discontent in Ireland. In common with all Liberals, we claim for England—not 'ascendancy,' indeed, but a just share of authority in the councils of Europe. But we conceive that England will best retain that authority, not by vain boasts of her power, still less by secret conventions and reckless annexations, but rather by deserving the confidence of foreign nations, and setting them a noble example of true national greatness, founded on constitutional liberty.

The results of the opposite policy have certainly not been encouraging. If the object of the Government was to check the aggrandisement of Russia, the result has been that Russia has obtained nearly all that she coveted. If their object was to preserve the integrity of Turkey, the result has been that Turkey is dismembered. If their object was to avoid incumbering this country with the protection of Christian nationalities in Eastern Europe, the result has been to incumber it

with the protection, and even the military defence, of Mahomedan tribes in Western Asia. Nor is this all. By movements purporting to be defensive, but really aggressive, they have converted the Afghan nation from a natural ally into a deadly enemy, and have vastly increased both the cost and the responsibility of Colonial Government in South Africa.

Experience has ever shown that what is called 'a spirited Foreign Policy' means a feeble and reactionary Home Policy. Certain reactionary projects of Lord Beaconsfield's Government were, happily, defeated by the Liberal Party. Its Home Policy has since been almost a blank, and nothing whatever is promised for the future. An extension of the County Franchise, a thorough revision of the Laws regulating the descent, tenure, and transfer of land, a comprehensive reform of County Government and Local Taxation, a settlement of the Burial Question on the basis of religious equality—these are measures which may be expected from a Liberal Government, and from a Liberal Government alone. Such measures, together with all others which may conduce to moral, social, or material progress, will receive our warmest support.

We observe that leading members of the present Government look forward to an early reduction of the national expenditure; and we gladly agree with them. It will be reduced when an economical Ministry succeeds the present extravagant Administration; then, and not before. It is vain to expect economy from a Conservative Government, and especially from one which is pledged to a policy of restless Imperialism. Its sympathies will always be with the consumers, rather than with the producers, of taxes; its traditional prejudices are opposed to retrenchment in the Army, Navy, and Civil Service; and its partiality for class interests renders it incapable of resisting the manifold temptations of jobbery. It is, therefore, no matter for surprise that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, having inherited a surplus of six millions from Mr. Gladstone, should bequeath to his successor eight millions of accumulated deficits, to remain for the next five years as a burden on the national

finances. For the means of clearing off this heavy liability we must look to a revival of trade, following on the adoption of a less wasteful policy at home and a less ambitious policy abroad.

Such, Gentlemen, are the principles which we, if elected, should endeavour to support, in a spirit of moderation and independence, but as loyal members of the Liberal Party, It is hardly needful to add that we should regard the interests of this county as possessing a special claim to our attention.

We regret that it will be impossible for us to visit most of the electors personally, but we hope to have opportunities of stating our views more fully at public meetings. Let us earnestly impress upon you, in conclusion, that union is strength, and that, under the protection of the Ballot, the vote of the humblest elector is his own. It is our desire to conduct the contest without bitterness, on strictly public grounds, and no effort shall be spared on our part to deserve the confidence which you may repose in us.

We are, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servants,

GEORGE C. BRODRICK.

CORNELIUS M. WARMINGTON.

Liberal Committee Room, Newport, March 18, 1880.



VII

SPEECHES AND LETTERS

POLITICAL AND OCCASIONAL



## DR. PUSEY AND PROFESSOR JOWETT

*To the Editor of the TIMES. February 23, 1863*

SIR,—Dr. Pusey is a bold as well as an orthodox man, or he never would have ventured into the open arena of discussion with those for whom the anathemas of the University pulpit and the citations of the Vice-Chancellor's Court have no terrors. It is scarcely possible, however, that he can have consulted his two allies, or 'friends,' as he now calls them, before taking this hazardous step. Had he done so, they would surely have recalled to his mind circumstances which would have deterred him from making the public the confidant of his motives and intentions. It is true that he 'abstains from saying anything except as to the abstract principle,' but abstract principles are just the weapons which Dr. Pusey's enemies would wish him to choose, and which his 'friends' should keep out of his hands.

It appears, Sir, you were mistaken in supposing that Dr. Pusey 'distrusts the power of God's truth' (by which I fear he means Dr. Pusey's truth) 'to abide the most searching inquiry.' Only the inquirer must be a man after Dr. Pusey's own heart, for 'it is quite another question whether all individuals are judges of truth.' It startles one a little to hear that Dr. Pusey himself has read, for forty years, 'more anti-Christian writings than any, probably, of your readers.' It may be the part of valour to state this, but is it the part of discretion? Does it not attract undue attention to the fact that Dr. Pusey's first publication was on the state of religious opinion in Germany, and that it betrayed a close acquaintance with neologian writers, which was mistaken by many for

sympathy with them? Of course, the Doctor has now outgrown these youthful errors, and finds, what every schoolboy is taught to say, as though it were the fruit of his own experience, 'that all deeper thought and criticism uniformly tends to the support of the faith.' But does it not occur to him that the honest search after the truth which has made him a bulwark of Anglicanism may be innocently followed by others, and that the shipwreck of individual faith which he mentions as a consequence of false teaching, may in reality be a consequence of that teaching which, trammelling inquiry with foregone conclusions, puts the interests of orthodoxy first, and those of truth second?

But then, says Dr. Pusey, 'I cannot imagine anything more demoralising than that clergymen should profess their belief in great fundamental truths, and assert the contrary.' When I read this passage, Sir, I confess I thought that it must be the preface to a solemn disclaimer of the doctrines laid down in 'Tract XC.,' and that Dr. Pusey was about to sacrifice his old friend, Dr. Newman, to his new 'friends,' Drs. Ogilvie and Heurtley. Remembering the reproaches that had been heaped on clergymen of blameless life and saintly piety for remaining in the Church of England when their hearts were with the Church of Rome, and on Dr. Pusey himself for not following his own principles to their logical results, I interpreted these words too hastily, and fancied they must be meant to prepare our minds for a confession, when, in fact, they were the basis of an accusation. That accusation is one which, lightly as it is made, will have to be substantiated by proof in a court of justice, and I cannot but think, Sir, that it would be in better taste to postpone it till Professor Jowett has been fairly tried.

This suicidal argument discloses the weakest point of all in Dr. Pusey's position. We have it now on his own authority that he is prosecuting the Greek Professor for an offence against ecclesiastical law, and not against Academical discipline. The premisses are that Professor Jowett has been party to a 'systematic attempt to revolutionise the Church

of England,' and that 'duty to God, to the Church, and to the souls of men,' compels Dr. Pusey to enter the lists against him. The conclusion is—not that Dr. Pusey should withstand him with the learning amassed by forty years' study of infidel writings, for that method of warfare is tedious and uncertain; not that he should proceed against him before an ecclesiastical court, for to that jurisdiction Dr. Pusey admits that Mr. Jowett is not amenable—but that he should deliver him over to the secular arm of a tribunal which has no power to protect the Church of England, which has nothing to do with the rights and liabilities of clergymen, and which will, in all probability, decline to take cognisance of the matter. I have read the statutes upon which Dr. Pusey and his 'friends' rely again and again, and I am thoroughly satisfied that they were never designed, and cannot be strained, to touch Professor Jowett's case at all. If they could, there is not a lay Master of Arts resident in Oxford who could venture to publish in London a book like that by which Dr. Pusey first made himself known. I have too much confidence in the ability and discretion of Professor Bernard to believe that this suit will be allowed to proceed, but I am quite certain that such a claim of jurisdiction will not be recognised for one moment in the Queen's Bench. But the Queen's Bench is not sitting, nor will it sit again until after Easter. Is it possible, Sir, that Dr. Pusey, who professes to put 'good faith' above 'theological truth,' can have selected this time for the prosecution on purpose to evade the lawful interference of that Court?

Let Dr. Pusey reflect on these two things: first, that the decision, whatever it may be, cannot bind the Church, or any one who has not the misfortune to reside within the precincts of the University cursed by the surveillance of this modern Holy Office; secondly, that the University itself will not be bound by it for a day. If it should be ever so oppressive, it will not be the solemn judgment of the University, but of a coterie appointed by the Proctors for the time being. Next year anti-Puseyite Proctors may be in office, a new set

of Delegates with kindred sentiments may be nominated, and, as there is no Statute of Limitations, Dr. Pusey himself may be brought under their ban for the sermons and books which have already incurred the censure of the University, unless the memory of that earlier work, which he has since, no doubt, committed to the flames, should then be revived in extenuation of his offence. I can well understand, Sir, that with the consciousness of all this, and the recollection of those facts which were pointed out in your article of Saturday last, Dr. Pusey feels it 'painful to have to act against one with whom, in this place, we must be brought into contact'; but I cannot understand what service he conceives himself to be rendering the Church by doing violence to that honourable feeling. If he turns Professor Jowett out of Oxford, he will turn him into some diocese in the Church of England, where (under the provisions of the Church Discipline Act, section 20) he can no longer be molested in respect of a work published more than two years ago.

'Prosecution is not persecution,' insists Dr. Pusey, as though he had not kept back Professor Jowett's salary before he invoked 'the majesty of justice,' meaning thereby the Small Debts Court over which the Vice-Chancellor presides. Of course it is not. Expulsion from one's home and the scene of one's cherished labours is not imprisonment; the loss of livelihood is not torture. This is an argument which has grown grey in the service of bigotry, and against which, it appears, Sydney Smith exhausted in vain the armoury of his scathing wit. Where he failed I cannot hope to succeed; but, though I should despair of convincing Dr. Pusey by reason that the use of any tactics can be illegitimate in defence of the faith, I am more sanguine of influencing him by authority. If I might presume to suggest to so learned a man an admirable precedent for conduct in a religious crisis, I should direct him, not to the history of Germany, but to that of Judæa. I would say to him: Put aside all those heterodox authors whose insidious sophistry may have left your faith unshaken, but has certainly warped your

judgment and perverted your sense of justice. Go to the New Testament, and read there the advice which a master in Israel, an accomplished Hebraist, a doctor of divinity, and theological professor in his way, gave to those who were for hushing up and stifling by a prosecution certain strange opinions, which happened in that case to be true: 'Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it: lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.'

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

A PROTESTANT.

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SPEECH IN THE TOWN-HALL, WOODSTOCK,  
OCTOBER 8, 1868

ELECTORS OF WOODSTOCK,—I feel it a high honour, as well as a great pleasure, to stand before you to-night as the Liberal candidate for this borough. As our Chairman has observed, this is the first time that I have addressed a public meeting in your Town-hall, but the kind reception which I have just received proves to me—indeed, my own feelings tell me—that I am no longer a stranger in Woodstock. It is now more than six weeks since I commenced my canvass, and during this period I have personally visited and conferred with the greater number of the electors. Perhaps it is never very wise to speak too definitely of results in such cases, but I have no hesitation in assuring you that I have met with all the encouragement that I could have expected; and I am now in a position to state publicly, and without reserve, that, come what may, I shall certainly go to the poll. I believe some of our opponents complain that I have come to disturb what they are pleased to call the peace of the borough. We have all heard of false prophets who cried 'Peace, Peace,' where there was no peace; and I leave you to judge whether these gentlemen do not labour under a like delusion. But I shall

not condescend to answer such a charge. I hold that any man who aspires to be a member of Parliament has a right to offer himself to any constituency, and to challenge the opinion of the electors on his political sentiments and personal claims. The mere fact, of which our Chairman has reminded you, that the number of electors in this borough has been more than trebled by the Reform Act, is surely enough to justify a contest, if any justification were needed.

I do not think the importance of this fact has yet been fully realised. Lord Palmerston, being once asked what he believed would be the consequence of a large extension of the franchise, made a reply which is worth remembering. He said, borrowing a figure-of-speech from the theatre: 'I don't believe the actors will be much changed, but they will play to the gallery instead of playing to the pit and boxes.' He meant, I suppose, that, instead of consulting the wishes and interests of the upper and middle classes, Parliament would thenceforth have to consult the wishes and interests of the whole nation. Now, I go further than Lord Palmerston. I think, not only the style of playing, but the actors themselves, will be greatly changed, and ought to be greatly changed. New measures require new men, and it is not to be expected that persons trained in the old school of politics should be equal to all the exigencies of the critical time which is coming. When the railways superseded the stage-coaches, engine-drivers were not elected from the class of coachmen; and I must say that, judging by his Address, if Mr. Barnett were about to drive a political engine in the new Parliament, I should not like to be a passenger by the train.

I regard this as a very momentous crisis in our national history, and I believe the future historian will date its commencement from the death of Lord Palmerston. Lord Palmerston was a most remarkable man, but he was no Reformer; and not the least remarkable of his qualities was his power of lulling to sleep the political spirit and conscience of the nation, so that he managed to stave off during his own lifetime the question of Reform, with all the other questions



which Reform was sure to force on. But the calm which reigned under his Administration was but a deceptive calm—

The torrent's smoothness ere it dash below,

and we have now to deal with difficulties which he only postponed. On Lord Palmerston's death Lord Russell succeeded him, with Mr. Gladstone for his Chancellor of Exchequer. An honest, though perhaps too moderate, Reform Bill was at once introduced, and would have enfranchised a large proportion of the working classes. It was defeated by a coalition of the Tories with a disloyal section of the Liberal Party, who denounced it as a 'degradation of the suffrage,' a 'transfer of power' from the educated to the ignorant masses, a scheme for 'swamping the constituencies,' as if with the refuse of the population, and a downward step towards the lowest depth of all—Household Suffrage. Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone thereupon sacrificed office to principle, and were replaced by Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli, who as promptly sacrificed principle to office. Convinced by the great meetings held all over the country, and by the Hyde Park riots, that it was unsafe to trifle with the people, they yielded to fear what they would not yield to justice. They brought forward, indeed, at first, a make-believe Reform Bill so ludicrously inadequate that some fancied Mr. Disraeli must have sunk into a state of hopeless imbecility; but it was only put out as a feeler, and quickly set aside for another measure containing the principle of Household Suffrage. That measure was studiously cumbered with vexatious clauses designed to neutralise its effect, and keep the power in the hands of the upper classes; but these disappeared one by one under the assaults of the Liberal Party, and the result is a highly democratic Reform Act. It has often been said that, throughout all these transactions, there was no fixed principle in the policy of Mr. Disraeli and his friends. That seems to me an entire mistake. There was a fixed principle, and that principle was a determination to retain place at any cost of honour. I have never been able to understand how English

noblemen and gentlemen could sit beside Mr. Disraeli and be parties to a course so utterly profligate; still less can I understand how they can now stand up without blushing, and pledge themselves never to consent to this or that, and expect the world to believe them. And now, having taken credit for granting Reform, of which they hate the very name, the Conservatives are doing their best to make it nugatory by what they call 'influence,' but I call bribery and intimidation. I remember a Radical friend of mine, who sometimes uses strong language, remarking last year: 'That fellow Disraeli, who is as clever as the very devil, thinks he is going to manipulate Democracy. Now, I say, take his Democracy, and hang his manipulation.' I adopt the spirit of this advice, though not the form of expression. It is our business to defeat these base tactics, and convert that into a reality which was designed to be a sham. It is to bear my part in this work that I have come forward, and it is to bear their part in it that so many good Liberals are assembled here to-night.

And now let us consider for a few minutes the question which has become the first battle-ground between the two parties—the question of the Irish Church. I own that I have so long been convinced of the necessity for Disestablishment that I feel a certain surprise, not unmixed with amusement, when I hear it treated as a new idea. Some, however, ask why Mr. Gladstone should have raised the issue just now, and accuse him of having done so for mere party motives. No man is more proof against such a charge than Mr. Gladstone, and I think I can give a conclusive answer to it. In the first place, the question was not started by Mr. Gladstone. It was the Government who proclaimed, with a flourish of trumpets, 'a truly liberal policy' for Ireland, and Mr. Gladstone, unless prepared to accept it, was bound to produce a counter-policy, as he actually did. But, again, with a General Election in prospect, how could Mr. Gladstone have concealed his mature conviction that it was time to abolish the Irish Church, and what would have been said—and justly said, too—had he masked his design, when an appeal was made to

the new constituencies, and 'sprung' it upon the next Parliament? In approaching the merits of the case, I dismiss at once the historical argument, upon which so much learning has been expended, for the simple reason that, from my point of view, it is quite irrelevant. I shall be prepared, on any proper occasion, to show how thoroughly hollow it is, but I must decline to enter upon it now, because I hold that it is a statesman's duty to be guided by practical, and not by historical, considerations. The maintenance of the Irish Church is not a point to be settled, like a right of way, by title-deeds, but a grave question of Imperial policy, to be determined by a reference to facts. Now, the facts are that, for two centuries at least, the vast majority of the Irish people have been Roman Catholics, that persistent but vain attempts have been made to convert them by persecution and persuasion, but that at this moment there are six Roman Catholics to one member of the Established Church in the whole population, and twenty or thirty to one among the poor. Yet the rich minority has all the ecclesiastical endowments, while the poor majority is left to shift for itself. Is this right? is it just? is it Christian? No unprejudiced man will venture to affirm that it is; but I will say more—it is not safe. I know it has been said that Roman Catholic laymen in Ireland do not regard it as a grievance. But the very people who allege this are the same who alleged that there was no popular demand for Reform, till the railings of Hyde Park fell down and the Government surrendered at discretion. The memorial presented last session from more than 900 Roman Catholic noblemen and gentlemen disposes of this statement, which is one calculated to provoke agitation. I sincerely rejoice that the Irish people have not yet demanded the abolition of the Irish Church with arms in their hands. I believe they have not done so because they rely on your sense of justice, and the action of your representatives in the new Parliament; and such is my own confidence in justice, that I doubt not that Disestablishment will be followed by a gradual but real diminution of discontent in Ireland. The absolute necessity

of doing something, with this object, has been acknowledged by the Government in what Mr. Lowe described as their 'hot-potato policy' of levelling up; but the plan of bribing the Roman Catholics, which they proposed, has been properly rejected by the country. Mr. Gladstone's proposal is founded on the very opposite principle. As it is impossible to endow all denominations alike, he recommends that all should be disendowed alike, due provision being made for vested interests, and that, henceforth, the ecclesiastical settlement of Ireland should rest on the basis of religious equality.

No one pretends to doubt that, if the question were new, this would be the right solution of it; but a thousand objections are put forward to show, either that it is too soon, or that it is too late, or that it would be inconsistent with something else, to adopt this solution. It is asserted, for instance, that the Irish Church is an integral part of the English Church, so that both must stand or fall together. Why, how is it possible for two institutions of the same kind to be more radically different? The one is national, the other anti-national; the one professes, and not without reason, to be the Church of the poor, the other is notoriously, and almost exclusively, the Church of the rich. It is as if the crew of a fine seaworthy vessel were urged to quit her and place themselves in a leaky boat, just about to founder. Not that I would deny that our Church is in danger. The Church is in danger, and ever must be, so long as her rulers, blind to the signs of their own times, and forgetful of the corruptions which threaten her safety from within, persist in identifying her with the injustice and tyranny of Protestant ascendancy in Ireland. But then, it is said that such a concession to Popery will be a fatal blow to the Protestant religion. What! is Protestantism, which, three centuries ago, wrested whole kingdoms from the dominion of Rome by the might of truth alone—is Protestantism now so weak that it needs exclusive protection, and fears a battle with Popery on equal terms? I believe, on the contrary, with Macaulay, that error, though no match for truth alone, will often prove more than a match

for truth and power together ; and that Protestantism in Ireland, relieved from State patronage, will be more powerful for good than ever. I confess I am filled with amazement and shame when I hear, not only lawyers, but divines, speaking of the Irish Establishment as if its existence were bound up with the interests of the Protestant religion—confounding a Church which is a mere creation of law, a mere engine of State policy, which Parliament established, and which Parliament can destroy, with that spiritual Church which is not of this world, which is founded in the hearts of men, and against which, as Scripture tells us, the gates of hell shall not prevail. As for the plea that it ought to be maintained as a ‘Missionary Church,’ I say that is the very reason why it should not be an Established Church. A Missionary Church ought to depend entirely on voluntary effort, and I never heard of a heathen population being required to support the mission sent out to convert it. But I will not dwell further on these objections. They have been answered over and over again by abler pens and tongues than mine, and they have no force against the broader view which I take of the whole question. This is no question of precedence between rival Churches—it is a question of Imperial statesmanship, of conciliating or alienating Ireland, perhaps of cementing or dissolving the Union. You will never heal Irish discontent ; you will never quench the Fenian spirit ; you will never check the tide of emigration, or attract an influx of capital ; you will never get rid of the danger which menaces you from that new Ireland beyond the Atlantic, until you have shown before the face of Europe and the world that you are resolved to do justice to our Irish fellow-subjects ; and you will never convince the world of this while the Irish Church stands.

There are many other questions which must soon engage the attention of a Reformed Parliament, but which I will not weary you by discussing to-night. Education, however, in its largest sense, is a subject which cannot be altogether passed over. First, there is popular, or primary education, which has yet to be brought within the reach of every child

in every parish throughout England. I was present at the Manchester Conference last spring, and I entirely adopt the general conclusions at which that conference arrived. We shall have, I am convinced, to modify our present system of voluntary school-management by introducing the principle of rating. We must, also, by making the Conscience Clause universal, provide against the imposition of any vexatious condition on the children of Nonconformist parents. I own that, like Mr. W. E. Forster, I am not yet prepared to go the whole length of compulsory school-attendance, which can only be enforced in the last resort by the policeman; but I foresee that vigorous measures will be needed, and applied, to check the spread of juvenile crime and vagrancy. Middle-class education, too, needs a thorough reform, especially in respect of endowments, now wasted, or worse than wasted, but available for the educational requirements of this class. Nor do I see why our great public schools, like Eton and Winchester, with their large revenues, should be altogether closed against boys of superior ability from the humbler ranks of society. University reform is a still larger subject. I have long laboured, with my friend Mr. Sidgwick, who is here to-night, and other Oxford reformers, to open both our ancient Universities to students of all classes and all denominations, encouraging at the same time new branches of study, and greatly reducing the necessary expenses. When these great changes shall have been accomplished in our several educational institutions, I look forward to seeing what I may call a national system of promotion by merit, enabling a poor man's son, if he be clever enough, to rise, step by step, to the highest eminence in Church or State. At the great question of taxation and expenditure I can but glance in passing. This is not the place or time for statistical disquisitions, but I regard the financial extravagance of Tory Governments as having been established by conclusive proofs. Now, I ask myself, and I ask you, why this should be so. I believe there are two sufficient answers. In the first place, the sympathies of Tory Ministers are with the consumers,

and not with the producers, of taxes; they have a natural propensity for spending other people's money with generosity, like the man who was so affected by a charity sermon that he plunged his hand into his neighbour's pocket, and poured the contents of it into the plate. But there is another reason. A Tory Government is ever, and I trust ever will be, a weak Government, and weak Governments cannot resist the pressure of demands from all sides on the public purse, lest they should lose the support of wavering adherents. Mr. Gladstone, on the contrary, will be at the head of a strong Government—and, what is more, he will have the people of England at his back—and I feel no doubt that he will make a vigorous and successful effort to cut down our overgrown Estimates. And now, Gentlemen, I must pass in silence over many topics mentioned in my Address, such as those which would fall under the head of social legislation, and the whole province of foreign policy. I will do Lord Stanley the justice to say that his administration of foreign affairs has been worthy of a Liberal Minister, but I question whether even Lord Stanley would have been able to withstand the clamour of his party for the recognition of the Slave States—a step which, if taken, would have plunged us into the most wicked and disastrous of wars. It is the less necessary that I should range over this great field, because I trust what I have already said, and published in my Address, has satisfied you that I am a sound and thoroughgoing Liberal by conviction and study; and when a man is that, if he is not too old or proud to learn, he has within himself a key to unlock most of the problems which he is likely to encounter. Moreover, I have professed myself, and now profess myself again, a loyal adherent of Mr. Gladstone—a man who, in political knowledge, has never been matched since the days of Sir Robert Peel; who, in political courage, is far superior to Sir Robert Peel, and who, in the highest qualification for government—an enlightened sympathy with the wants of all classes—stands alone among the statesmen of our time.

And this brings me to what, after all, is the grand differ-

ence between the Liberal and Conservative Party at the present juncture. Read the addresses issued and the speeches made by Conservative candidates, and you will find them full of apology and negation. They tell you, glibly enough, what they will not do; but when you ask what they will do, they have nothing to say. Talk of Conservative policy!—they have no policy but to wait for something to turn up. What President Lincoln said of General McClellan is not inapplicable to Mr. Disraeli: ‘That fellow is always talking of his plans, but I’ll be hanged if I believe that he has any plans at all.’ After the experience of the last two years, how can any one speak of Conservative principles? Prejudices, passions, party-spirit, they may have, but principles they have none; and this is the fact they would vainly endeavour to disguise by adopting the new-fangled name of ‘Constitutionalists.’ Constitutionalists, indeed!—why, if there be any characteristic of our Constitution, it is that it has no such limitation as Conservatives would fix, but has grown with the growth, strengthened with the strength, and expanded with the expansive energies of the English people. No! the Conservatives of our own day have no longer any faith to rally them. They have no faith in themselves or their leader: and there I cannot blame them. They have no faith in truth, or they would not be afraid to leave Protestantism face to face with Popery in Ireland. They have no faith in justice, or they would not despair of pacifying Ireland by a righteous act of conciliation. They have no faith in progress, in the onward march of civilisation, or in the ultimate triumph of good over evil, and are inspired by no hope of a happier future reserved for the toiling and suffering masses of mankind. There is but one thing in which they appear to have faith, and in that their faith is unlimited. I mean their own power to work upon the vices and weakness of human nature, by corrupting and intimidating those whom they pretend to have deliberately enfranchised. Thank God, we Liberals have a nobler and more hopeful creed! To us Reform was no ‘leap in the dark,’ for we had long foreseen it, and striven to bring it



about, not only as a measure of justice to classes so long and so jealously excluded from power, but as a new lever for beneficent legislation. To us the future is not clouded with visions of Democratic violence ending in national ruin, but rather, bright with fresh hopes of progress, of improvement, of a national unity such as has never been realised in the lifetime of any of us. We look forward to questions hitherto neglected being viewed in a new light, and treated in a new spirit—to all that concerns the happiness of the people being far more earnestly considered than heretofore. But let us not deceive ourselves. Before we can grasp these results we have a very hard battle to fight. That battle is being fought even now in almost every constituency throughout the United Kingdom, and we here in Woodstock have no mean part in it allotted to us. You know, and I know, and the world knows, the formidable nature of the influence which must be overcome before we can vindicate—as vindicate we shall—the independence of this Borough. We shall need all our energy and all our courage to win the crown of victory. But we do not stand alone: public opinion is with us, the spirit of the age is with us, and I, for one, feel that I am fighting before the eyes of all my countrymen. Believe me, I have undertaken this contest in no presumptuous spirit; I know my own weakness, but I know also the sustaining power of a good cause. I rely on the untiring support of the gentlemen round me; I rely on the hearty and vigorous efforts of those who now hear me, and I feel within myself a deep assurance that I shall not fight in vain.

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#### A LETTER TO THE REV. G. J. B.

MY DEAR SIR,—It is seldom wise for a clergyman to descend from his pulpit, where he may dogmatise without fear of refutation, into the free and open lists of political controversy. It is hardly ever desirable for a non-electors to meddle with a

contested election, unless where a special appeal has been made to him.

In the letter which you have recently addressed to the electors of Woodstock, you have committed both these acts of indiscretion, without any excuse that I am able to perceive. The speeches on which you comment were delivered, not at Woodstock, but at Abingdon, and your reply will have the effect of making them known to some persons who might otherwise never have heard them. Nor do you confine yourself to the subject of those speeches; on the contrary, you volunteer general advice to your readers on their political duties, and do not scruple to launch out into personalities. You plead, in justification of your interference, that the Irish Church is 'emphatically an ecclesiastical and clerical question'; but I am at a loss to understand how this presumptuous statement can warrant your flippant reference to the Ballot. You further plead 'a sense of duty,' arising from the circumstance that you 'commenced your ministry as Curate of the parish of Woodstock, and have been more or less connected, almost ever since, with the Borough.' You omit to mention what, however, is a material fact in the case—that you were also Domestic Chaplain and Tutor at Blenheim Palace, and that you were lately appointed to your present living by the Duke of Marlborough. I acquit you of a conscientious desire to please your patron by issuing an electioneering pamphlet, but I cannot acquit you of an officious partisanship which fairly lays you open to such a suspicion. I do not doubt that you wrote under a sense of duty, but your assurance that you did not write 'from any inclination for such polemics' is too much even for that charity which believeth all things.

Your arguments respecting the Irish Church are so ably refuted in the accompanying letter of Sir G. Young to the Rev. A. Headley, that I shall not waste my own time by replying to them at length. But, as your reflections on the conduct of Mr. Lushington clearly exhibit the prevailing spirit of your pamphlet, I will deal briefly with them. The

electors of this Borough will then be able to judge for themselves what degree of weight attaches to your most confident assertions. You allege that Mr. Lushington frankly avows hostility, not only to the Church in Ireland, but to the Church in England also; and you proceed to ask 'how his present convictions can be reconciled with accepting a Fellowship in a Church of England College.' Now, it is not strictly true that Mr. Lushington avows hostility to the Church of England. He only goes so far as to say, what Dr. Pusey would probably endorse—that he has no special love for Establishments, and that if the English Establishment 'came to represent the religious views of a much smaller proportion of the population,' he would be in favour of severing its connection with the State. But let me now put a plain question to you. Are you aware that several years ago, and long before his marriage, Mr. Lushington spontaneously resigned his Fellowship at All Souls' College on conscientious grounds? If you are not, you have recklessly made an attack on an University contemporary, in every way entitled to your respect, without taking pains to inform yourself of a fact destructive to your argument and easily ascertained. If you are (which I will not readily believe), you have been guilty of an unworthy and disingenuous suppression of truth. I leave you to choose between the horns of this dilemma, and the public to decide how far you can be trusted on questions of historical research, when you thus misrepresent circumstances almost within your own knowledge. But you do not stop here. You proceed to sneer at persons whom you describe as 'accepting Fellowships, founded for purposes of study and tuition, at Oxford, and living habitually in London or elsewhere.' I must infer that, had you been fortunate enough to obtain a Fellowship, which is the highest reward of Academical merit, you would have scrupled to hold it in the position, for instance, of Curate at Woodstock. If so, I do not share that scruple, though, in common with most Oxford Liberals, I am for reforming the whole system of non-resident Fellowships. In the meantime, I may apprise you that the founder of

Merton College, whose views in the thirteenth century would appear to have been more enlarged than yours in the nineteenth, expressly ordained that his Fellows should not be confined to the walls of a College, but should go abroad into the world. As it is, every College has the right to call into residence any Fellow whose services are required, and Mr. Lushington (like myself) always took a most active part in the government of his College, so long as he remained a Fellow.

The narrow view which you take of the Irish Church Question does not surprise me, since you premise that it is 'emphatically an ecclesiastical and a clerical one.' I deny this. Matters of theology may be peculiarly within the province of the clergy, though even there an assumption of authority on their part is inconsistent with the first principles of Protestantism. But the establishment or disestablishment of a particular Church by the State, instead of being emphatically a question for clergymen, is emphatically a question for statesmen, or, rather, for the Imperial Legislature. Clergymen, like any other citizens, have doubtless a right to express their opinions upon it, but those opinions are very likely to be coloured by a contemptuous ignorance of legal principles, which has always been characteristic of the clerical mind. The vice of which I speak is well illustrated by every paragraph of your pamphlet.

You assert, for instance, as 'a fact,' that the Irish Established Church 'is the ancient Church of the Country,' 'that its property is in no sense the property of the nation,' and that the argument now used against it 'would apply with equal force to Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle' or the Duke of Bedford's possession of Woburn Abbey. You adduce no evidence, and quote no authority, in proof of this assertion, which is only true in a sense which is not worth discussion. Those who believe in Apostolical Succession may trace, if they please, the pedigree of the Irish Episcopate up to St. Patrick, and recognise the existing Protestant Establishment as the proper representative of the old Catholic Church. For me it

is enough to know that, whereas that Church embraced the whole nation before the Reformation, it then ceased to embrace more than a small part of the nation, thereby forfeiting all claim to be treated as a national Church. No wonder that you 'cannot pause to explain' the causes through which 'the Irish nation unhappily failed to receive the benefit' of that great awakening 'to the same extent as the English.' The simple explanation of the fact is, that Queen Elizabeth's Ministers, no less blind than yourself to considerations of justice, strove to force Protestant truth upon the Irish by making them pay for their own conversion; and the same policy has produced the same fruits from that day to this. With a disregard for popular rights which is not yet obsolete among Conservative statesmen, they took counsel with the Bishops alone, relied on 'influence' for the success of their enterprise, deliberately excluded the representatives of the inferior clergy from the Irish Parliament which adopted the Royal Supremacy, and visited them with penalties for their resistance to it. As for the great mass of the people, they had no voice in the matter, and never accepted the new religion which their rulers had provided for them. All this seems to you perfectly right, and you stand aghast at the proposal to undo it by an Act of the Imperial Legislature, with the consent of a vast majority of the Irish nation. According to your view, an Irish Parliament carefully packed by the Lord Deputy, and representing a mere fraction of the population, was competent to establish the State Church; yet the Parliament of the United Kingdom, including representatives from all Ireland, is incompetent to disestablish it. And then you echo Lord Derby's absurd saying, that 'the Church has at any rate as good a title to its property as the House of Russell has to Woburn Abbey.' Who disputes that either has a valid title in a Court-of-law—a title, that is, which is valid against any claimant except the State? The best precedent for the Disendowment of the Irish Church is, in fact, to be found in the dissolution of the monasteries, and it is those who may hereafter share its revenues whose title

will be as good as that of the Duke of Bedford. You may call the application of national property to national purposes a robbery of the Church. We call its present application a robbery of the nation. You wish to see a little more transferred from the Bishops to parochial clergymen, or from richer to poorer dioceses: 'robbing Peter to pay Paul!' We wish to have only such of the revenues of the Establishment as were originally the gift of the nation redistributed in the true sense of the word—I mean, devoted to objects of national utility, instead of being appropriated to a rich minority of the community, and serving to aggravate the grievances of the poor majority.

Two more fallacies I must point out, inasmuch as the exposure of them cuts the ground from under all your remarks upon the proprietary rights of the Church. You boldly allege that 'the property of the Irish Church had its origin in special gifts—some from public, some from private sources: some before the Reformation, a considerable number after it.' The simple answer to this vague statement is, that of the 531,000*l.* that form the annual revenue of the Irish Church, 364,000*l.* is tithe rent-charge, besides the income derived from 132,000 acres of glebe land, both of which are purely State gifts; while, of the remainder, I cannot succeed in tracing more than 7,000*l.* to private sources. The Churches have been built: firstly, by rates levied on Catholics and Protestants alike; secondly, by Parliamentary grants; thirdly, by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, with funds drawn from the entire Church Revenue; and fourthly, to a small extent, by private beneficence. But Mr. Gladstone, as you ought to know, never once has proposed to appropriate any portion of the revenues of the Irish Church that can be traced to a private source. You seem, indeed, to be conscious of this historical fallacy, for you seek to cover it with an economical fallacy, if possible, more transparent. You describe the tithe rent-charge as 'no tax at all, but simply a sum paid by the landlord,' and 'as to seven-eighths, by Protestant landlords.' I do not care to discuss the question whether tithe is not a

'tax' just as much as the land-tax, but it is a downright absurdity to suppose that it makes any difference whether the landlord or tenant is the actual paymaster. Whatever be the channel through which the 364,000*l.* is paid, it is a fund applicable to the benefit of the whole Irish nation, and now reserved for the benefit of one section. You deny that 'any man, woman, or child is one penny the poorer for the Established Church.' I assert that all the Irish Roman Catholics are the poorer by five-eighths of those revenues which the Established Church derives from the gift of the nation.

I will not dwell upon that passage of your letter in which you cast off the mask of the divine, facetiously compare my opponent to King Log, who did nothing, and affect to ridicule 'the talk about intimidation.' The endeavour to extenuate what you well know to be the curse of this constituency, apparently because the guilt of it lies at the door, not of the poor, but of the rich and powerful, is but too much in keeping with the rest of your pamphlet. Let me recommend to your notice the last paragraph of Sir George Young's letter, in which he points out the real duty of a clergyman at a contested election.

There is one point, and one only, upon which you and I are entirely agreed. You raise the cry of 'The Church in danger!' and I heartily admit that you have good reason to do so. The Church of England is in danger, and ever will be, so long as her champions, blind to the signs of their own times, persist in opposing truth and justice in the outraged name of religion and piety. She cannot fail to be in danger, so long as her advocates disavow her claims as a national Church, or as the Church of the poor, by identifying her with an anti-national Church which is maintained in the interest of a dominant class. She must be in danger, so long as she is undermined from within by Romish doctrines and practices, encouraged as they are by some of those very Bishops who profess to be dismayed by the aggressions of Rome from without. She ought to be in danger, if her parochial clergy betray their sacred trust by reserving their censures and

warnings for the sins of the poor, lest they should offend the resident nobleman or squire, instead of crying aloud, like the prophets of old, against aristocratic pride, against commercial fraud, against oppression and corruption in high places.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

GEORGE C. BRODRICK.

Bear Hotel, Woodstock, November 13, 1868.

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SPEECH ON THE HUSTINGS AT WOODSTOCK,  
NOVEMBER 16, 1868

ELECTORS OF WOODSTOCK,—I stand before you to-day as the Liberal candidate for the representation of this Borough, as a loyal supporter of our great leader, Mr. Gladstone, and as the champion of your independence. Gentlemen, there is a time for all things, and a contested election is a time for good humour. Though we have had a little rough play in front of these hustings, I am happy to observe that, on the whole, this good rule has been respected, and that our proceedings hitherto have been disgraced by no serious outbreaks of ill-feeling. My relation, Colonel Thomas, who proposed Mr. Barnett, has been kind enough to give me some advice from a sporting point of view. No one can be more competent than Colonel Thomas to give advice in the hunting-field, and I should always be glad to follow his lead across country. But politics are altogether a different affair, and there I flatter myself that I know the line of country better than he does. I have no reason to complain of the way in which Mr. Barnett has spoken, on this occasion, of myself. But he has presumed to attack more than one of my supporters, and I beg to inform him publicly that I am not base enough to accept compliments to myself at the expense of my friends. I say here, as I said elsewhere, that I am proud of my supporters, and I utterly repudiate, on their part, the use of the smallest undue influence. My friend Mr. Hiorns, to whom allusion has been made, has not only put no pressure on his



tenants, but has not even asked them for their votes. My friend Mr. Baugh, instead of having been brought down from London by me, was at Kidlington before I was invited to stand for Woodstock, and when I first met him I had no idea who he was. But as Mr. Barnett has expressed a wish to abstain from personalities—though he has not quite acted up to it—I am willing to brush aside all matters of this kind, and I hope to say nothing which can give him, or any other individual, legitimate offence.

Now, in coming forward to contest this Borough of Woodstock, I cannot but feel that my opponent has some advantages over me. In the first place, he was in the field a month before me, and, to my knowledge, obtained many promises, as the first comer, by representing that it was almost certain that no other candidate would present himself. Then, again, he is not, like myself, a novice in political life; he has already represented Woodstock, or, if not Woodstock, yet somebody, and some place, for three years, and ought to be able to give you some account of all the measures which he has promoted for the good of the people. Mr. Barnett, indeed, complains that I have described him as the enemy of the poor. I have never so described him in his private capacity, but I have often said, and I now repeat it, that he belongs to a party which has always resisted, and still resists, measures for the benefit of the working classes. But then Mr. Barnett is a neighbour, as he is very fond of telling you, while I was a stranger to most of you until three months ago. Not that I can admit that this gives him any claim to your votes. I have read my catechism, and hope that I know my duty to my neighbour; but I was never taught that it is any part of your duty to your neighbour to vote for him at a contested election. And I cannot help observing that in that parish of Wootton, which lies close to Mr. Barnett's home, he does not seem to have a very numerous body of supporters. . . .

On the other hand, I feel that I have some great advantages over Mr. Barnett—advantages so great that, instead of being angry with him at this moment, I actually pity him.

I pity him because this is the first time that his face has dawned on the Woodstock horizon since the last election ; and it must be very unpleasant to ask publicly for the votes of a constituency which you have treated with so little respect. I pity him because he has been compelled to canvass working men whom he tried to exclude from the franchise as long as he could, and on whom he helped to lay an extra rate when he could exclude them no longer. I pity him because throughout his canvass he must have seen that he has not the hearts of the people, and because he relies for success on a kind of influence of which, as an honourable man, he must be ashamed, of which I would not avail myself to save my election, and which Sir Henry Dashwood, my chairman, would rather cut off his right hand than exert. I pity him because he will go to the poll with this paper tied round his neck—[Mr. Brodrick here opened a paper recording Mr. Barnett's votes in Parliament]—a paper which shows how entirely he has unrepresented your interests and feelings in the House of Commons. I can well understand that my observations do not please some of our opponents. That is not because they are untrue, but, on the contrary, because they are too true. Let me tell you an American story which throws light on their feelings. A man came home to his wife looking very much put out and offended. She asked him what was the matter ; when he explained that one of his neighbours had been calling him names, and imputing to him all kinds of misdeeds. 'Well, my dear,' she replied, 'what does that signify ? He may say it, but he can't prove it.' 'Confound the fellow !' roared the husband, 'but he *has* proved it, and that's just what I can't bear.' And so it is with our friends here on the right ; they writhe under my appeal to facts, because there is no answer to it. [Mr. Brodrick then replied to Mr. Barnett's defence of the Conservative policy on the question of Reform, Economy in Public Expenditure, and the Irish Church. He expressed his surprise that Mr. Barnett should have referred with self-complacency to our present friendly relations with America, remembering, as he must, that

his party did all in their power to plunge us into what would have been the wickedest and most disastrous war that ever afflicted mankind.] Of course (Mr. Brodrick continued) our opponents profess entire confidence in their success. That is part of their game. Some people don't know when they are beaten, and some, it is said, don't even know when they are killed. You must have heard of the gentleman who was beheaded without being aware of it. So dexterous was the executioner, that although the knife passed clean through the poor man's neck, his head remained on his shoulders as if nothing had happened. 'Why, you've not done your duty,' he called out, looking hard at the executioner. 'Shake your head, sir,' rejoined the latter; and so he did, and the head rolled off before him into a basket. Perhaps, when Mr. Barnett shakes his head about 4 o'clock to-morrow afternoon, he may find that it is not so firm in its position as he now supposes.

As for myself, I can hardly describe better what my course in Parliament would have been than by saying that it would have been the very reverse of that adopted by Mr. Barnett. I should have voted for, and not against, the total abolition of Church-rates. I should have voted for, and not against, the admission of Dissenters to the Universities and Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge. I should not have voted against giving the Borough Franchise to the working classes in 1866, or against giving the County Franchise to 14*l.* occupiers. I should not have voted, in 1867, for requiring the payment of full rates from all householders, relieving many landlords from a just burden, and throwing it upon the cottagers. I should not have voted for requiring a longer residence from the poorer than from the richer elector. I should not have voted for maintaining the Church of a rich minority, at the expense of the people, in Ireland. I should not have voted for restricting the importation of foreign cattle, and thereby raising the price of meat. [Interruption from Mr. Barnett's supporters on the platform.] I hear some murmurs from the farmers and butchers who stand behind Mr. Barnett; you know what that means, and how far their interests in this

matter are the same as yours. I should not have voted for keeping up the unjust system of purchase, under which promotion in the Army depends on wealth, and not on merit or length of service. I would not, above all, have voted for keeping up the degrading practice of flogging soldiers in time of peace—especially when the more humane and enlightened members of the Conservative Party joined with the Liberals in abolishing it. And, lastly, I should not have voted against the Ballot, but, on the contrary, should have given it my heartiest support.

If you send me to Parliament, I should go thither as a member of that great Liberal Party to which this country, and especially the working classes, owe all the grand reforms that have been carried in the present century—Free Trade, Education, and a cheap Press, and that Act of last year which has increased this constituency from 300 to 1,100—a party which alone has any policy or any hope for the future. I should go to support, not Mr. Disraeli, whom I regard as a mere political Jesuit, distrusted by his own party as much as he despises them—but Mr. Gladstone, a true man of the people, a man who has the eye to see and the heart to feel the wants and interests of his countrymen, and, what is more, the courage to do and dare anything in carrying out his convictions. I should go to advocate measures which I believe to be urgently demanded by public opinion from the new Parliament—the Ballot, a broad and unsectarian system of national education, promotion by merit in the Army and Civil Service, justice to Ireland, a large retrenchment in the national expenditure, a further reduction in taxes which press most heavily on the working classes, and, generally, all measures which can elevate the moral condition and increase the happiness of the struggling and toiling masses. But I should also go, and I now come forward, to vindicate the independence of this Borough. It is vain to conceal, what all the world knows, that Woodstock has always been regarded, and justly regarded, as a pocket-borough of the Duke of Marlborough. I remember hearing of a case in which a

member had been returned for another of these pocket-boroughs by the influence of a great nobleman. He wrote a polite letter to his patron, thanking him for his election, and enclosing another for the mayor of the borough. The nobleman answered by return of post, acknowledging the letter to himself, but stating that as the other was a mere formality, he had thrown it behind the fire. I don't know, Mr. Mayor, whether anything of that kind has occurred within your recollection at Woodstock, but I am quite sure that it might very well have occurred. Mr. Barnett, I know, objects very strongly to being called a nominee of the Duke, and, in one sense, I believe he is right. It is no secret that Mr. Barnett is not the candidate whom the Duke would have preferred, and there are those present who were parties to an intrigue for bringing forward the Marquis of Blandford. However, about that time I appeared on the scenes, the Tories said that it would not do to divide their strength, and Mr. Napier at once joined Mr. Barnett's committee. Henceforth Mr. Barnett has been the nominee of the Duke. If any one doubts that he is entirely dependent on the Duke's influence, let me ask you this plain question: Suppose there were no Liberal candidate in the field, and suppose that the Duke were to put up his coachman against Mr. Barnett, which would you back—Mr. Barnett or the coachman? Now I think it is high time for it to be decided once for all whether it is Blenheim or Woodstock that returns a member to Parliament, and I have come forward to give you the opportunity of declaring that this unconstitutional influence shall exist no longer.

And now, Electors of Woodstock, I leave this great issue in your hands. My part is played; yours is now to begin. I have not spared myself in fighting your battle—for it is your battle—and my friends around me have supported me with an energy and devotion which nothing but an earnest faith in the justice of our cause could have inspired. I have everywhere been met with a kind welcome that I can never forget; and let me here say that I rely entirely upon the promises which I have received. To me the promise of the

poor is as the promise of the rich. I do not believe that men who have enlisted under my banner will turn their backs in the day of battle, or that Englishmen will sell their birthright for a mess of pottage, and submit to be driven like slaves to the poll. Small as Woodstock is, no election has attracted more attention throughout the country than ours, because all England knows how great is the principle at stake. I appeal to your reason and consciences alone. If Mr. Barnett's cause is your cause, if Mr. Barnett's principles are your principles, if you honestly believe that he is the best man to represent, not Blenheim, but Woodstock, in Parliament, then vote for Mr. Barnett. But if you believe that mine is the cause of truth, of justice, of liberty, of progress—the cause, above all, of the working classes—if you are resolved to break from off your necks a yoke which neither you nor your fathers have been able to bear—then, I say, go and record your votes for me, like honest and brave men, at the poll; and may God defend the right!

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SPEECH IN THE TOWN-HALL, WOODSTOCK,  
JANUARY 28, 1874

*(Very imperfectly reported)*

MY FRIENDS, AND ELECTORS OF WOODSTOCK,—At last the time has come to which I have so long looked forward—the time when I should again meet you face to face, and address you in this hall in the capacity of a Liberal candidate. And now, the first question I have to answer is why, during all these five years, I have never been in Woodstock. My answer is very easy and simple. Woodstock is a small place, and it is a place where party feeling runs very high—I should not wish it to be otherwise at the time of elections - and I felt that my appearance here would not only be a signal for a fresh outburst of party spirit, that would not do any good to any one, but would be a signal for that influence to be brought to bear against which we have to fight to-day as we have fought before. The next question I have to answer is, How I

come to be here now. I am here now in response to an assurance which reached me that I might hope on this occasion, not only to carry those who voted for me on a former occasion, but also many of those who could not vote for me then, although they voted for me in their hearts, but will, under the protection of the Ballot, now have the power of voting at the poll as they voted in their hearts before. I think it right to tell you that it cost me no mean sacrifice to come here, as I did yesterday morning when I knew that I was likely to receive the support of the agricultural labourers in a body, upon whom I count with great confidence to support me as one man. Until I knew this, I confess I felt that it would be very little use renewing the old acquaintance, and at the moment this assurance reached me I was receiving a most influential deputation from Evesham in Worcestershire; and I shall never forget to the last hour of my life the entreaties with which I was importuned on all sides that I would not desert them for Woodstock. But I was proof against these entreaties, because I was told, and felt, that Woodstock had the first claim on my services. The chairman of the meeting that was held at Evesham—and it was one of the best meetings I ever saw—got up, and said to the people assembled: ‘Gentlemen, we must not blame Mr. Brodrick; we must remember that Woodstock has not only the first claim upon him, but that a victory at Woodstock is more important for the country than at Evesham.’

The next, and last question, is, What have I come here to do? Well, I have told you that in the very outset of my Address; I have come here to vindicate Liberal principles. Mr. Godden has spoken, and we have heard a great deal of late, about what many call Conservative reaction, and I think that Mr. Godden hit the right nail upon the head when he mentioned, as one of the causes of that so-called Conservative reaction, the tendency of people as they get on in the world, and become rich and prosperous, to be very well contented with things as they are, and to desire very little change for the benefit of others. I take this to be one of the great and main

causes of the Conservative reaction. When a man has made his fortune, and got all that he wants, and particularly if he happens to take a country-house, his first ambition is to get his wife and daughters into what is called, or what calls itself, county society; and I am sorry to say that in many parts of the country—I am not sure that it is not so here—the best passport to county society is a certificate of having turned Tory.

If this were the time and place to do so, I could mention other causes; but of one thing I am sure—that if this Conservative reaction exists to a great extent among the rich and noble, it has not yet reached the homes of the poor, and therefore I rely with confidence, not only on the Liberal principles manifested in this Borough five years ago, but also on the development of these principles among that class which holds the fate of this election in their hands. If I am asked what Liberal principles are, I would refer the inquirer, as I do in my Address—I am anxious not to repeat anything I have said there—to that wonderful series of great measures passed in the last five years. I think that these are the most extraordinary pieces of legislative work that have been done in our Parliamentary history. As I am speaking frankly, I will confess to you that I have been rather disappointed at some things not being done which I did hope would have been done by this Parliament. There have undoubtedly been shortcomings, particularly in the direction of legislation for the benefit of the people at large; but they are shortcomings which are very easily to be explained, because during the first two or three years of this Parliament the attention of the House of Commons was almost entirely engrossed with Irish affairs. Well, no doubt some mistakes were made, and a good many people's toes trodden upon, and many interests offended; but I maintain that it is the highest virtue and the crowning merit of Mr. Gladstone's Administration, that it has deliberately preferred national interests to the interests of any individuals, or class, or section whatever; while it will be a lasting disgrace to the Opposition, as led by Mr. Disraeli,



that it has sought every opportunity of combining with any little discontented class, whether it were the purchase-officers, or the Irish clergy, or the publicans—that it has always been ready to enter into league with any class that happened to be discontented, simply because its interests appeared to conflict with the interests of the public at large.

If you look at Mr. Disraeli's Address, which I will not read to you, though it is a clever document, you will find that one of the main charges against this Government is, that it has meddled a great deal too much with Home affairs, and too little with Foreign affairs. This is a very strange charge to make against a person—a charge that he had minded his home business too much. Mr. Disraeli says that he wished there had been a little more energy in Foreign Policy, and a little less energy in Home Policy. Well, I can quite understand his being of that opinion. No one who has read history can be ignorant of the fact that times of war, in which there has been a spirited foreign policy, have been dark and depressing times for the cause of the people. Mr. Disraeli is very fond of a spirited Foreign policy, because he knows well that such a policy means a feeble and reactionary Home policy. All the great things that have been done for domestic improvement, for progress, and for civil and religious liberty, have been done in quiet times; and you may depend upon it, we should never have got through the work of the last five years if we had done as Mr. Disraeli would have wished us, and been poking our fingers into every foreign pie, and quarrelled with Germany or taken the part of France, and, as he evidently wishes, had not settled the dispute with America. I look upon the settlement of the dispute between this England and that England on the other side of the Atlantic as a great and magnificent achievement on the part of the present Government. I speak from positive knowledge respecting this matter, having visited that country last autumn. I should like to read you a very short paragraph in Mr. Lowe's Address. It is as follows:—'Mr. Disraeli tells us that he does not think the condition of the United Kingdom is im-

proved by incessant and harassing legislation. This means that it is best not to legislate at all, and, if you do legislate, to take care to offend no one. Compare the state of England with her state forty years ago. To what do we owe the change? To laws which harassed the owners of boroughs, the corrupt corporations, the protected trades and industries, and the Universities—in short, all persons and institutions which held privileges adverse to the general welfare.’ Well, Gentlemen, Mr. Disraeli goes on to speak of the income tax. Mr. Gladstone proposes to abolish the income tax, and Mr. Disraeli says he would have done exactly the same. To this Mr. Lowe gives a good reply, and says that it is a great pity that he did not tell us that before, and adds, that he did not wonder at his being very much upset about the income tax, because this tax was to enable the country to carry out the policy of Free Trade, which he bitterly resisted. I wonder at Mr. Disraeli alluding to finance, for finance is not a strong point of the Tory policy. I believe I am correct in saying that there has been scarcely a single year of Tory Administration, within living memory, that has failed to show an increase in the national expenditure, or a deficit in the revenue. But during the last five years no less than 10,000,000*l.* has been taken off in the shape of taxes, and the National Debt has been reduced by 25,000,000*l.* And this is in addition to the cost of the purchase of the telegraphs, and the money paid to America in respect of the ‘Alabama’ claims. Of course, we must not forget the Ashantee War; but the cost of that war will not be so great as was anticipated. Surely this is a happy account for Mr. Gladstone to render.

Mr. Disraeli alludes to the difference of opinion in the Liberal Party. Well, Gentlemen, no doubt there is a difference of opinion among the Liberal Party, and I will tell you why. There are many ways of going on, and only one way of standing still. If you go on, there is always a difference of opinion as to the road you shall choose; but if you want to stand still, there is no difficulty in deciding the way in which that shall be done. Then he says that the Liberal Party are

attacking the institutions of the country. Well, I don't know what he means by that ; but if he means the Monarchy, if he means that there is a considerable party, or a party at all, among the Liberals, who are hostile to the Monarchy, or disloyal to the Constitution, I believe it to be an utter and complete delusion. On the contrary, I do not scruple to say that I have heard more disrespectful language used about Her Majesty in high and aristocratic circles than I have ever heard or read in the proceedings of any public meeting. Mr. Disraeli must then needs go on to speak of the House of Lords ; but I am very much afraid that he means to imply that any idea of reforming that House is an attack on the institutions of the country. I think that it would have been far more prudent on his part to have been silent respecting the House of Lords, because I must say that the conduct of that House for the last forty years, and especially during the last five years, has sorely and severely tried the patience of the people. The House of Lords exists, they tell us, for the purpose of revising hasty legislation that might have been passed by the House of Commons—and a very useful purpose that is—but I entirely deny that it fulfils that purpose. I am unable to mention a single hasty measure, such as we should all regret, that has been stopped by that House, but, on the contrary, the few such measures that have been passed have gone through that House by acclamation. But what that body has stopped have been the salutary measures upon which the House of Commons have resolved, and which are destined to become laws, and which the House of Lords will pass, sooner or later, but upon which they waste a great amount of public time in their vain attempts at obstruction. I don't wonder that Mr. Disraeli is silent about the future, and that for the best of all reasons ; as is also my noble opponent, Lord Randolph Churchill, whose Address I have had the pleasure of reading—because there is no future whatever to Tory policy. I defy you to extract from either of those Addresses, or from any of the Tory Addresses issued throughout the country, a single indication of what Mr. Disraeli would really do if he

got into power. I think it would be possible to sum up in a single sentence the real essence of Tory policy, and that is the very reason why I will for ever oppose and resist it. I believe that Tory policy means nothing more nor less than Government by the landed aristocracy, aided more or less by the Tory section of the country clergy.

I have said enough, perhaps, about Liberal principles and the Tory Addresses; but I must not forget that I have not only to vindicate Liberal principles, but also, as I have said in my Address, to vindicate the independence of this Borough. That is a topic about which Mr. Godden has said something. I have told Lord Randolph Churchill privately, and I will now say it publicly, that I hope this contest will be conducted in an amicable manner, and without needless personality, and to that Lord Randolph replied in a spirit which did honour to him. Having said that, you will easily understand why I do not wish to dwell too strongly on this particular topic—the independence of this Borough; but at the same time I was rather amused on Saturday, just after the announcement of the Dissolution, by meeting a man in the streets of London, whom I did not know, but who had a very rough coat on. He said to me: ‘I hope you are going to be member for Blenheim, sir.’ I thought it a very odd mistake to make, but I am afraid it was a mistake that others have made. I may say that I should feel myself totally unfit to be member for Blenheim. All that I aspire to, is to be member for Woodstock, and that, with your assistance, I hope to be before I am much older. I will remind you of what Mr. Godden has said—that our position is altered by the introduction of the Ballot. I am not in favour of the practice, nor would any one in this room be, of promising one thing and doing another, but now it is possible for a man to give his vote exactly as he pleases. He has nothing to do but to decline to promise, if he chooses to do so, and he can go and give his vote as his conscience dictates at the polling-booth.

There is another cause which I also came to vindicate, and that is—I say it openly and in a straightforward manner—

the cause of the agricultural labourers. Gentlemen, let us understand each other on this point. I am not an Unionist; I am not a labouring man, and don't live in the country, and have not thought it my duty to join the Agricultural Labourers' Union. I have seen many things that have been done, said, and written, in the name of the Union, which I cannot approve of, but, on the contrary, I somewhat deplore as damaging the good cause. If I were asked to take part in an Union meeting, I must confess I should have some hesitation in doing so, and perhaps the remarks that I make will come somewhat flat and tame compared with those you have been accustomed to hearing of late. Having, however, said this much, I wish to add that I have a true and hearty sympathy with the object which the Agricultural Labourers' Union has in view, and I entirely agree with the generous words I have quoted in my Address from that of Mr. Gladstone, as well as the words in the same sense uttered by my friend, Sir W. Harcourt, at Oxford. I believe that movement to be one of the most beneficial of our age. It is a movement which could never be brought about by legislation; it is a movement which has been the creation of a man sprung from the ranks of the people; it is both just and righteous in itself, and likely to conduce, as Mr. Gladstone says, to the stability of the Throne and all the institutions worth preserving. Mr. Gladstone says: 'Of all the changes marking the present day, there is none which I view with more heartfelt satisfaction than the progressive rise of wages in the agricultural districts. I view this rise as the natural and proper, though long-delayed, result of economic laws; as the removal of something like a national discredit; as carrying with it a great addition to the stock, never too abundant, of human happiness; and as a new guarantee for the stability of the Throne and institutions of the country.' We shall perhaps be told that Mr. Gladstone is a very impulsive man, and that you don't know how far his feelings will carry him. This reminds me very forcibly of the remark of President Lincoln about Mr. Grant, who is now President of the United States, and who was one of the

most successful of the United States generals. When Grant was carrying all before him, President Lincoln was told that it was very distressing that General Grant was rather addicted to strong liquors; to which Lincoln replied: 'I wish you could tell me of which particular liquor he is fondest, because I should like to send a large cask of it to every one of my generals.' Well, that is just what I feel about Mr. Gladstone's impulsiveness. He is impulsive, because his heart beats in unison with the hearts of his countrymen; his mind is open to new and noble impulses, because he has a real faith in the sound feeling, not only of the higher or the lower classes, but of all the people of this country, every class of which he recognises as his own flesh and blood.

I have said, Gentlemen, that what has been done on behalf of the agricultural labourer could not have been done by any legislation or Parliament whatever. I don't believe any reasonable man thinks that it is in the power of Parliament to raise wages 2s. a week; but in former times very unjust laws were passed, expressly intended to reduce the rate of wages, but these laws entirely failed in their effect, as must any laws of a similar nature. I have said in my Address that something may be done to improve the condition of the labourers by legislative enactment, and that since 'unwise legislation has concurred with economic laws in depressing the condition of agricultural labourers, wise legislation may properly concur with economic laws in raising that condition.' Gentlemen, it would be impossible for me on the present occasion, and within the time allotted for me, to specify all the modes by which I believe that improvement may be effected or aided. I have mentioned several of them in my Address, and every thing I have there said has been carefully weighed. The first thing to be done to aid the agricultural labourers' movement is to get Household Suffrage in the counties, for then the labourer would in a great measure be able to help himself. That is a really sound and salutary way of bringing about the results they desire, if they would only send men to Parliament whom they could trust, and let them judge as far as

possible what would be the best and wisest means of arriving at the object they desire.

That is exactly the position which I venture to claim for myself. The truth is, this district, and even the very Borough of which most of you are electors, is really a slice of the county with Household Suffrage. We, in this Borough, are exactly in that position which Mr. Arch claims for the counties, and I wish he was here to-night. He knows me well, and the last time I met him was in Canada. I now ask you to place me in that position by which I may further the end you have in view, and undoubtedly the country will look with interest for the decision of this constituency at the approaching election, and see what man you return to Parliament. I therefore ask you to give me your confidence. I don't claim for myself all that the Chairman has said of me. I claim not the power of instructing you, and I should be sorry to claim the right of leading you, without the aid of much wiser persons than myself. But I do claim to be independent. I am not a labourer, farmer, or landlord. I am simply a man who, having had certain advantages of education, have earnestly devoted myself to the study of politics, and I hope, if you send me to Parliament, I shall go there with an impartial and unbiassed mind, without the slightest desire of promoting any personal or professional objects. I have no profession except politics, and it would be my highest ambition to feel that, when I should leave Parliament, I had done something to better the condition of the people. It is upon these grounds that I venture to ask for your kind and unanimous support at the approaching election. Let me earnestly entreat of you to study union, and stick together. Everyone should feel and act as if the Liberal and Agricultural Labourers' causes depended upon the contest at Woodstock. We don't want a long pull this time, because there is very little time left us; but we want 'a strong pull, and a pull all together,' and if we have this, depend upon it next Tuesday the victory will be ours, and no victory throughout the country will be more heartily welcomed by all thorough Liberals and

generous minds than that which may wrest and rescue this Borough from the influence—I will not speak disrespectfully—to which it has hitherto been subject, and vindicate once and for all the Liberal Cause in the Borough of Woodstock.

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SPEECH AT SOUTHSEA, MARCH 7, 1877<sup>1</sup>

THE HON. G. C. BRODRICK said he felt it a high honour to have been selected to return thanks for the Liberal Party before that great audience. He stood before them that evening as a stranger and as an unknown man in Portsmouth; and as he looked around him, he was afraid he saw very few, if any, faces that were familiar to him. He did not possess the advantage enjoyed by his friend Mr. Reed, of being a member of Parliament, and he was only too well aware that he had not the special claims to their attention which Mr. Reed derived from his connection with this Borough; but, as their Chairman had reminded them, he was one who had fought and suffered for the Liberal cause. He had strong faith in Liberal principles, and was glad to say that he was in no way under the influence of what had been termed the 'Conservative reaction'; and speaking to men whom he believed to have strong faith in Liberal principles, and who were willing to make sacrifices for the purpose of upholding those principles, he felt that, although unknown to them, he was not speaking among strangers, but rather among friends. Now, he saw in one of the papers published in Portsmouth a notice which would lead them to suppose that he was going to say something that evening on the subject of Education. He begged them to dismiss any such supposition from their minds. It was true he might have to allude, in the course of his observations, to education; but the text he had chosen that night was 'Liberal Opinion on the Basis of Distinctive Liberal Principles.' That was his text; and, unlike some preachers, he should endeavour to stick to it as closely as possible.

<sup>1</sup> Abridged Report from the *Hampshire Telegraph*.



With reference to distinctive Liberal principles, the first thing he desired to impress upon those present, or, rather, he should say, to remind them of, was the fact that it was a distinctive feature of Liberalism to have principles at all. Not very long ago a witness was giving evidence at an election inquiry—he believed it was at Taunton—when the Judge put the question to him, ‘Pray, sir, may I ask you what are your political opinions?’ To which the man replied, ‘Well, my lord, I do not know much about politics. I am no great politician. I have no politics. I am a Conservative.’ Now, he did not believe that it was possible for the witness to have given a better definition of Conservatism than that. He understood that last week the Conservatives of Portsmouth had what they termed a banquet in that very hall. He was not invited to it, and he very much doubted whether any of those present were. However, he had read a report of the proceedings; and he naturally looked through the various speeches to see if he could discover throughout either of them any trace of Conservative principle. What did he find? Why, he found that one gentleman compared Mr. Reed to a pot of Holloway’s Ointment. That was certainly not a principle. Then he found that another gentleman said he should like to punch Mr. Gladstone in the ribs. That was not a principle, and he should certainly advise the gentleman who gave utterance to that remark never to try to gratify his desire. Then, again, he observed that Mr. Lowther, who had the reputation of always being able to make a good rollicking after-dinner speech, actually had the courage to praise Russia, not because she had vindicated the cause of the Christians in Turkey, but because she kept the Liberals in good order throughout Europe. That was one of the most daring assertions he had heard for a long time; and he was afraid it would not be endorsed by many. When the Conservatives talked of principles—and it was a well-known fact that they often borrowed Liberal principles to talk of—there was no doubt that, while the voice was Jacob’s, the hands were the hands of Esau. When the Conservatives talked of principles,

he was forcibly reminded of something that President Lincoln once said of General McClellan, who was so unsuccessful at the beginning of the American War. Now, the General was a man who was continually arranging schemes which, unfortunately, ended in nothing, and the President said on one occasion: 'That fellow is always talking of his plans; but I will be hanged if I believe that he has any plans at all.' That was exactly what he believed of Conservatives; but yet he was forced to admit that they had one principle, and that was, Government by the landed aristocracy. He maintained strongly that that was the one and only principle by which Conservatives would really be willing to stand. Let them just look for a moment at the composition of the present Government, or, perhaps, he ought to say, of the present Cabinet. What would they find? Why, that there was not a single member of that Cabinet, except Mr. Gathorne Hardy, who represented Oxford University, who was not either a noble lord or a member for a county. There was not a single representative of a borough among them. If they looked at their measures, to which the Chairman had so ably referred, including one of the most creditable to them—namely, the Artisans and Labourers' Dwellings Act—they would not, if they looked through them from first to last, find one that either touched the interests or in any way affected the prejudices of the landed aristocracy. He was the very last man to set class against class. On the contrary, he was one of those who admired the landed aristocracy as a class. He believed that if any other privileged class throughout all the world had had equal power, such power would have been far more unscrupulously exercised than it had been exercised by the landed aristocracy. He would even go further than that, and say that, if he were to be governed by one particular class, and not by the nation, he would most certainly rather be governed by that class. But still, he maintained that class government, such as the Conservatives believed in, was not national government, and that class government was utterly and absolutely inconsistent with Liberal principles.

What were Liberal principles? It would be perfectly impossible for him that evening to do more than touch in the most summary way on some of the more distinctive of those principles; and, giving them a few outlines, he would leave his audience to fill up the details for themselves. Some of the illustrations he should have placed before them had already been suggested by their Chairman, and he would avoid, if possible, going over the same ground again. Liberals were often challenged as to what their principles really were. First and foremost, then, Progress was a Liberal principle. When he was asked, as he sometimes was, whether he were an Advanced Liberal, he invariably said, 'No.' The fact was, he was not an Advanced Liberal, but an Advancing Liberal; and if he were not an advancing Liberal, he could not be a Liberal at all. Why, the whole of their constitutional history was a history of progressive changes and progressive reforms, made and carried out by the Liberal Party for the time being, under whatever name, and against the strongest and most violent opposition on the part of the Tory Party for the time being, under whatever name. All this was not mere accident; but, on the contrary, it arose from a most profound and serious difference between the Liberal and the Tory point of view. The Liberal had a faith in human nature, and especially in the good sense of his own countrymen, and in their capacity for self-government, which gave him what Mr. Gladstone had called confidence in the people, such as no Tory ever could possess. And, what was more, the Liberal had a faith in the future, which no Tory ever had possessed, or ever could possess. The Liberal was a man of progress, and entirely unlike the Tory. He did not carry his eyes in the back of his head, but looked forward with great calmness and confidence to the future, believing, with the poet, that what men had done was but an earnest of what they yet might do, fully convinced that a good time was indeed coming, though it may be far distant, and that a happier future was designed in the counsels of Providence for the toiling and suffering masses of mankind.

Need he tell his hearers that evening that Freedom was a Liberal principle? Surely not; for it was well known that freedom was the very life-blood of Liberalism. Their Chairman had already reminded them of some of the ways in which this Liberal principle had been enforced in times past. There was freedom of the Press—a freedom which was only won after a most desperate struggle, at the peril of both life and limb, by Liberals a few generations ago. But it was personal freedom for which Liberals had always fought most strenuously. He was not then speaking of the freedom secured under the Habeas Corpus Act, but personal freedom to British subjects throughout the British Empire. He boldly asserted that personal freedom was never won until the great Reform Bill had been carried by the efforts of their ancestors, and entirely by the united efforts of the Liberal Party. The Abolition of Slavery, it was hardly necessary to remark, received the violent opposition of the Tory Party, allied with the West India interest. Freedom of worship and freedom of election to municipal offices, were, in the same way, advocated and secured by the Liberals, against the resistance of the Tories, from a Conservative Minister—the great Duke of Wellington himself—downwards. These liberties were not secured until the struggle had been prolonged for generations. As for the freedom of trade, most of those present would remember how that was won by the Liberal Party, who at last succeeded, chiefly through the exertions of one man, the late Mr. Cobden; and how that statesman ultimately succeeded in converting Sir Robert Peel. He would remind them that Sir Robert Peel paid the penalty of that conversion, not merely by exclusion from office, but by the lifelong and implacable hatred of the Tory Party. Then, again, freedom of labour was never secured until the other day, when the iniquitous Combination Laws were broken down by an Act passed by the late Government. Freedom of voting, too, was never secured until the Ballot Act was passed, against the united opposition of the Conservative Party, who relied on what they called ‘influence,’ but which he called corruption

and intimidation. Then, as to freedom of education, that, as their Chairman had reminded them, was first guaranteed by Mr. Forster's Education Act; for until then there was no such thing as freedom of education, seeing that it could not exist so long as all creeds were not placed on equal terms in schools largely supported by the nation. It was the Liberals, again, who secured freedom of education in the Universities by sweeping away religious tests. It was not possible to avoid noticing the abolition of that which could only be described as a tax upon knowledge. He alluded to the heavy stamp duties upon newspapers, which prevented the poor man from acquiring information; and it must be remembered that such abolition was the work of the Liberal Party. He was much amused, some time ago, by the saying of a Tory gentleman who was a member of the House of Commons. That gentleman was listening to Lord Beaconsfield, then Mr. Disraeli, who was moving one of his Budgets, he then being the Chancellor of the Exchequer. This Tory gentleman waited until Mr. Disraeli had described all the taxes he proposed to take off—and they were not very numerous—when he was overheard to say: 'I hope to God he is going to lay on a thundering tax upon knowledge!'—evidently thinking that such a tax would never reach himself.

There was another principle which was also purely Liberal; and that was, Equality. He was aware that the word 'equality,' used in relation to politics, had a somewhat democratic sound, and he did not know that he should have ventured to have mentioned it a week ago in that room. But he must say that the word Democracy did not alarm him; and he trusted that it would not alarm those present. Three years ago he attended a meeting of the Banbury Liberal Association, and was pleased at the manner in which its affairs were conducted. They put forward as their main object a purpose so excellent and so admirably worded that he would recommend it strongly to the consideration of the Liberal Association of Portsmouth. The object he alluded to was defined to be 'Liberal legislation tending towards perfect equality among all classes, in

all relations of public life, whether civil or religious.' He maintained that all true Liberals were fully impressed with the importance of that principle of Equality; and that that was one of the reasons why they were so hearty in their support of everything tending to help forward the cause of education. They believed that education was the safest and best of all levellers. That, too, was one reason why, or, rather, he should say, the main reason why the Liberal Party so heartily supported the abolition of purchase in the Army; and that was the reason why they promoted and supported competitive examinations and promotion by merit in all branches of the Public Service. He remembered at the time of the Crimean War an amusing story went about to the effect that some old-fashioned general—for the fact must not be concealed that there were old-fashioned generals as well as admirals—had said, on hearing of the introduction of the principle of promotion by merit: 'Good heavens! If they introduce this principle of promotion by merit, all my officers will be wanting to distinguish themselves.' Why, that was exactly what the Liberals wanted to see, not only at Alma and Inkermann, but in all the relations of public life, civil and religious—to use again some of the words defining the object of the Banbury Liberal Association. They desired that promotion should follow upon these acts of distinction, and not upon any privileges of mere birth or wealth, or anything of that kind.

Another Liberal principle was one which was, perhaps, not quite so easy to state, but he would call it, Respect for Human Nature, as such. Here he was afraid he might trench somewhat upon the ground which Mr. Reed was expected to occupy. However that might be, he felt bound to maintain that it was essentially a Liberal principle to respect human nature, as such, not merely because Christianity taught them the value of human souls, but also because experience taught them that all races, and all classes, and all types of mankind were capable of almost infinite elevation. And he would say, that it was by virtue of that principle that Liberals abolished the penalty of death for, he was afraid to say how many

hundred, comparatively trifling offences. Liberals felt that even criminals and outcasts from society were worthy of some respect and consideration. And it was by virtue of that feeling that they did away with the lash and the branding-iron, and by virtue of the same principle that they had introduced humanity, as far as possible, into our relations with the savage nations, and forbearance into our relations with subject-populations. It was the same principle which led all Liberals sternly to condemn the atrocities practised under the name of martial law in Jamaica. He verily believed that it was not a hatred of Turkey or a love of Russia which stirred up this country against the Bulgarian Massacres; but that it was the principle of respect for human nature, as such, which all true Liberals held. He was very glad to read the assurance of Mr. Lowther that not a solitary button on one of their blue jackets, or a single hair of one of their gallant soldiers, would be placed in jeopardy for any matter arising out of the internal administration of the Turkish Empire. He thought, however, that it was rather an odd thing for a man who belonged to a Government which boasted of its 'spirited' foreign policy to say. He thought it a great pity that Mr. Lowther or his leaders had not said that until the nation had taken the conduct of Eastern affairs into its own hands.

He would mention one other Liberal principle—viz., the Supremacy of all National Interests over all Particular Interests, whether they were personal interests, or class interests, or professional interests, or sectional interests—interests of any kind whatever. He knew that that was a somewhat delicate topic to handle in a place like Portsmouth; but he had not come here to conceal opinions, but, on the contrary, to express what he felt. And he could speak with some freedom, because he could truly say that, as far as he understood the matter, he had never been in favour of that reduction in the Dockyard establishment which he supposed had been so unpopular in this town. He was one of those men who would always bake his bread and brew his beer at home, and have a family dairy; and if he would do that, it would be seen that

he would naturally be in favour of building our ships at home, at our own national establishments. He was, as a matter of fact, opposed to the principle (whether rightly or wrongly, he did not know) of having our warships mainly built by contract at private yards. Speaking generally, however, instead of the course taken by Mr. Gladstone's Government in carrying certain unpopular measures being a reproach, he considered the course one which entitled them to much credit, showing, as it did, that the national interests were held to be far above all other interests—whether the interests of the lawyers, of the clergy, of the landlords, or of the people interested in educational endowments. To put the matter shortly, Mr. Gladstone and his Administration set the interests of the nation wholly above the interests of all classes of individuals. It was well known that the Conservative Government had traded upon the opposite principle. When a Conservative Government came into office, an impression seemed to spread, from the admiral and general down to the humblest seaman and private soldier or marine, and from the heads of departments down to the humblest clerk or messenger, that their private interests would be protected, and it would almost seem that they supposed that England no longer expected that every man would do his duty, but only hoped that he might do so. For some time that impression seemed to prevail, and no harm was done; but afterwards this state of things created mischief. The fruits of the good seeds sown by the previous Administration were soon reaped; and the savings which had been made by a judicious and complete system of economy were soon expended; while the classes of people to whom he had alluded began to get disappointed, as well they might, finding that the promises made to them had not been performed. Then the nation, roused at last from its fit of indolent inaction, discovered that a vigilant regard to the national interests was, after all, of paramount importance.

He would say no more on Liberal principles. Many, perhaps, would say that he had been telling the old story, and that it was all very fine; but the Liberals were so weak



and divided that they could do very little at present, and had very little chance of being again united. Was that so? They might not have been able to do much good—no Opposition could do much good; but it was perfectly clear that they had prevented a good deal of harm being done. He would mention a few instances in which the Liberal Party had effectively intervened to prevent great mischiefs being done. The first was, when the Liberal Party modified the provisions of that Bill whereby Mr. Cross thought to propitiate the licensed victuallers; and, while mentioning this subject, he might perhaps say that he conscientiously believed that these concessions to publicans were just as contrary to the interests of the publicans themselves as they were to the interests of the public at large. Then, again, the Liberal Party interfered to prevent mischief being done by the Tories in the case of the Endowed Schools Bill, introduced in 1874 by Lord Sandon, the effect of which Bill would have been to have tied up for an indefinite time many of the middle-class endowments of this country to the Church of England alone. In that case the Liberals were entirely successful. The Liberal Party had, too, prevented the Government from stifling the agitation so righteously got up by Mr. Plimsoll. The Liberals on that occasion secured, at all events, a partial measure of shipping-reform. Then, with regard to the issue of the Slave Circular, the Liberal Party resisted the Government in their attempt at reviving, indirectly, that system of slavery which it was the pride of the last generation to boast that they had for ever abolished. They all remembered, too, the Royal Titles Bill. It was just possible that too much was made of the matter on both sides; but, however that might be, it was clear that if the Liberal Party did not succeed in getting rid of the Bill altogether, they reserved it for use, as his friend Lord Rosebery had wittily said, as an external application only. The title of Empress could not be applied in England, or Ireland, or Scotland, and that was certainly something gained. Again, the Liberal Party had intervened in the Eastern Question; and most certainly (though he did

not wish to do any injustice to the Government, and though he believed Lord Derby was a man of peace) he was of opinion that, unless his Lordship had been supported and urged forward by the Liberal Party, he might, against his own judgment, have committed this country to the maintenance of the Turkish Empire.

Let them now look for a moment to the future; and in directing their attention to this point he would (although not a cricketer himself) refer them to something which took place in connection with that national game about three years ago. At the time he mentioned, there was a panic among cricketers lest the art of batting should become so perfect that the adepts in bowling could not get the batsman out; and the question was, whether it would not be desirable to alter the rules of batting in order to meet the case. While the panic existed, a very sensible letter appeared in print from Mr. Lillywhite, who suggested that one way of getting rid of the difficulty would be to improve the bowling. Now that was exactly the principle which he (Mr. Brodrick) would apply to their Parliamentary tactics; only he thought there should be more frequent changes of bowling. He reposed great confidence in the true patriotism and solid good sense and sound Liberal principles of the Marquis of Hartington, and he was quite sure there was no man who would more desire than he would to afford everybody the opportunity for fully and openly expressing his opinions. He thought the great superiority in debate of the Liberal Party was now beginning to tell on the country. The Liberal Party could not carry Parliamentary divisions, it was true; but, thanks to the Press, their freely-expressed ideas were largely influencing the opinions of the public. The Tories did not like to feel that they were in the wrong, and that they were overmatched in debate. He thought it was to that superiority in debate that was partly due the encouraging signs of a turn in the tide which were now visible. Let them look, for instance, at the results of the municipal elections last autumn in many of the boroughs of England, and then, again, at the results of the School

Board elections—a sign which was the most encouraging of all.

They were told, however, that the Liberal Party could not be rallied on any measure, and that all they could do was to criticise. Now let them look at two or three questions. He would first deal with the question of Education. He was very pleased to see in that day's 'Times' that the Education League of Birmingham was about to be dissolved. Why did he say he was glad? By no means because he did not fully sympathise with the objects of the League, of which he was once a member, but because he thought they had acted wisely in saying that they had now merged into the Liberal Party, and could trust the Liberal Party to carry out those of their aims which yet remained to be accomplished. He should like to know what Liberal was in favour of denominational education, and what Liberal did not feel that in the future education must be placed on a national or municipal, and not on a denominational, footing? That was the reason why the Liberal Party opposed as one man that reactionary Bill of Lord Sandon's—which, he regretted to say, was carried last session—whereby it was possible for schools which called themselves voluntary, without there being any voluntary subscriptions whatever, to cease to be voluntary at all, and be maintained chiefly at the national expense. The Liberals were, too, opposed to those provisions in the University Reform Bill which retained all clerical Fellowships, as really giving an exclusive privilege to the Church of England, to which he belonged, and against which he hoped never to say a word. There were also questions relating to the land and to local government; but time would not permit him to dwell upon them. What Liberal was there who was in favour of the law of primogeniture and strict entail, and all those cumbrous formalities which helped to keep the land in the hands of a very few people? Then, again, what Liberal was there who was not in favour of protecting the rights of commoners against the aggression (he must use that word) of lords of manors? and what Liberal was there who was in

favour of maintaining the present Game Laws and the present system of the administration of those laws by an unpaid magistracy? As far as the question of the County Franchise was concerned, he might say that he referred to it the more boldly because he was quite aware that many Liberals thought it unwise to introduce Household Suffrage for the counties; but how different were the reasons advanced by the Liberals from those advanced by the Tories. The Tories dreaded the increase of independence among the labouring classes; and while they were waiting in anxious dread of being compelled to take another 'leap in the dark,' and to rely upon their 'influence,' which, as he had before said, simply meant corruption and intimidation, the Liberals looked forward anxiously to the time when the labouring classes in the counties of England would be rendered fit, by the advancement of education, to be entrusted with the franchise. It was a shame that, for three whole centuries since the Reformation, so large a class of the people should be kept in a state of political infancy. He firmly believed that before many years had passed away a measure granting Household Suffrage in the counties would be passed by the Liberals; or, if they did not do that, they would manage to convert into a reality some sham measure for the purpose which might be proposed by the Tory Party.

There was one word he wished to say in conclusion, and that was on the subject of Organisation. There were some people who professed to distrust organisation, and who were of opinion that a party got on best without it, and that when a candidate came forward he became the Centre of his own organisation. Other people believed that the divisions which existed in the Liberal Party were of such a character as would not admit of the members being brought together. Now he utterly disagreed with the first of those two opinions, believing, as he did, that the success of the Conservatives at the last election was mainly due to the fact that they were as infinitely superior to the Liberals in organisation as the Germans were to the French in the late war. To say that organisation was of no use, was like saying that a man was

just as likely to hit a mark without aiming at it as by taking aim. He quite admitted that there was more force in the second opinion. There could be no doubt that there were divisions in the Liberal Party; but he must confess to being, in a certain sense, proud of them, as showing that Liberals retained freedom of thought and independence of action, two things which had always characterised them as a party. He thought, however, that Liberals, when dealing with the common cause, should subordinate the lesser questions to the greater ones, and should sacrifice smaller points, retaining, of course, their private convictions. They should learn the lesson which adversity taught them—that some sacrifices must be made for the sake of ensuring the triumph of their cause. If they wished to ensure success, let them waive opinions on questions which were, after all, of minor importance, as compared with those great distinctive Liberal principles they all held, and rally themselves upon those questions. After all, however, organisation was of little use without individual energy and individual faith in principles. There were some present that evening who might have spent a lifetime in fighting for Liberal principles, and there might also be others who had never given the matter any thought, and to whom that evening's gathering might be a first experience in politics. The former he would urge to rally upon the basis of distinctive Liberal principles; and if their courage should fail—and the courage of all of them was wont to fail in trying times—let them remember those who, in days far rougher than the present, were content to live and die for the liberties which they had handed down to the present generation. Let them remember their fathers, who waged a life-long struggle, against far greater difficulties than had now to be encountered, in order to get the Reform Bill passed. Let them also recognise the courage displayed by the Tories throughout more continuous adversity than that which the Liberals now experienced; and let them firmly resolve that, come what might, and whatever others might do, they would each, in his own place and in his own station, do his duty faithfully by the great Liberal Party and the great Liberal Cause.

ADDRESS ON 'IMPERIALISM AND LIBERAL POLICY,'  
DELIVERED AT GUILDFORD, DECEMBER 28, 1878<sup>1</sup>

I HAVE undertaken to speak to-night of Imperialism and Liberal Policy. Speaking on such a subject, before such an audience, I shall not pretend that I am not going to deliver a political address, but I can assure you with perfect sincerity that I am not going to deliver a party address. By this I mean, not only that I shall not indulge in those violent personalities which are too common among our opponents, but which are unworthy of the Liberal cause, and, I may add, inconsistent with my own character, but that I shall not think it necessary to denounce every Conservative idea, and extol every Liberal idea without qualification or exception. I stand here as a Liberal from boyhood; as a Liberal, not by interest, but by conviction; as a hearty and thoroughgoing Liberal, who is not afraid to trust his principles: but I do not stand here as a passionate or one-sided Liberal partisan. I can afford to admit that Conservatives now and then—but not very often—get hold of some principle worth conserving, and that Liberals now and then ride their hobbies too hard. And therefore, when I speak of Imperialism, I shall not shut my eyes to its better side; nor shall I shrink, on the other hand, from alluding to one or two weak points—not in Liberal principles, but in Liberal policy.

Well now, I dare say this word 'Imperialism' has a strange, un-English sound to most of you, as I am sure it has to me. In fact, it is a word of which the British Constitution knows nothing, and which never came into common use in this country until some two years ago, when the present Government thought proper to dress up our Queen in Imperial robes, and proclaim her Empress of India; as if we must needs pick up a title which France had the good sense to fling down, and as if any new-fangled and high-sounding title

<sup>1</sup> One or two passages in this Address are borrowed from the Speech at Southsea.

could add dignity to a crown which English kings and queens have worn for a thousand years, not by Divine right, but, simply and solely, by the consent of the English people. Still, we must not forget that long before the Queen became Empress of India Great Britain was the centre of a mighty Empire, including, not only India, but all our Colonies in every part of the world. This Empire is partly the result of conquest, like the great Roman Empire in ancient times—and far be it from me to justify all the wars by which some of our foreign dominions have been acquired. But it is mainly the result of colonisation, and, if we put out of sight India, and mere fortresses like Gibraltar and Malta, most of our Colonies are really free nations—as free as Great Britain herself. They acknowledge the Queen as their sovereign, and they speak of the Home Government as the Imperial Government, but they are practically their own masters, except when they apply to the Colonial Secretary for advice or assistance. Now, if it be a Conservative idea to be proud of such an Empire as this, I am not ashamed to avow myself as, so far, a Conservative; and if there are any Liberals who desire to see the Colonies separate themselves gradually from the mother-country, I can only say that I am not one of them. I cannot look at it as a mere question of pounds, shillings and pence; a man is none the richer for having a large family, and yet what father of a family would desire to reduce the number of his children? I like to know and to realise that, travel where I may—in Asia, in Africa, in America, or in the isles of the Pacific Ocean—I cannot go far without seeing the Union Jack floating over some peaceful and orderly settlement of my countrymen, with English faces, English manners, English notions, English religion, and English laws, talking of England as their home, cherishing equally the English sentiments of loyalty and of liberty, and speaking that familiar but noble language which is the glorious birthright of the English race. I like to feel that where the Colonial Office does interfere with colonial affairs, it interferes chiefly as a beneficent adviser or mediator. Yes,

Gentlemen, Imperialism in our Colonies nowadays means neither Imperial tyranny nor Imperial jobbery. It means helping forward and guiding the great experiment of self-government in young communities; it means keeping the peace between two European races in the same colony, or between Europeans and natives; it means reconciling French Catholics to Canadian Orangemen; it means encouraging free trade in Australia, and checking famine in India, and putting down slavery everywhere. This is true Imperialism, and this I am prepared to advocate as strongly as any Conservative. And if this be not enough for our ambition—if we must needs indulge in dreams of a Greater Britain than even Great Britain and her Colonies—then let us dream, not of warlike conquests and annexations, but of that great peaceful conquest which may yet be reserved for us in the fulness of time, when this England of ours shall join hands with that other England across the Atlantic, and the whole Anglo-Saxon family shall be united in one confederation, be it under a monarchy or be it under a republic.

If this be true Imperialism, what is the false Imperialism to which Liberal policy is opposed, and against which every Liberal should protest? False Imperialism is the policy to which the present Government and the Conservative Party has been committed under the leadership of Lord Beaconsfield. This policy rests on the notion that national greatness consists, not in the prosperity or the virtue—much less, in the political intelligence—of the people, but mainly in the extension of territory; just as some landowners measure their importance by their acreage, and not by their real influence, or even by their real wealth: but also in the increase of national prestige—in what Lord Carnarvon well describes as ‘Swaggering down the High Street of the world, with the hat cocked, and on the look-out for some fancied insult or affront.’ This pernicious delusion I believe to have been deliberately embraced by Lord Beaconsfield, if not by his colleagues. When Mr. Gladstone was in office, no charge against him was so persistently repeated as the charge that his foreign policy was a



tame, and not a spirited, foreign policy. He settled our disputes with America by arbitration, instead of by going to war about them; he declined to interfere between France and Germany, but left them to fight out their own quarrels; and he actually allowed Russia, with the consent of all the other European Powers, to have ships of war in the Black Sea. Lord Beaconsfield succeeded, as we can now see, with a fixed determination to have a spirited, and even an Imperial, foreign policy; but so long as he had Lord Derby, an eminently cautious man, for his Foreign Secretary, and Lord Carnarvon for his Colonial Secretary, this was not so easy. However, a time came, as it was sure to come, when this partnership was dissolved, and since that we have had an Imperial policy in foreign affairs with a vengeance. It is not my intention to dwell on the earlier stages of the Eastern Question, about which you have probably heard quite enough; and, if I did, I should be unable to justify everything said or done by the more impulsive section of our Liberal friends. I never could stand on a platform and attribute just, generous, and unselfish and far-sighted views to almost every Government in Europe except our own. I cannot defend hypocrisy and bad faith and cruelty, even when they are practised against Turks; nor can I be wholly blind to the aggressive ambition of Russia, even when she proposes to be the champion of suffering Christians. But all this I regard as ancient history. A new chapter in the Eastern Question opens with the Treaty of Berlin, and my charge against Lord Beaconsfield is that, in the pursuit of a false Imperialism, and out of an utterly mistaken patriotism—for I admit that he is a patriot at heart—he has dragged this country, without consulting Parliament beforehand, into new engagements of the most perilous kind, which have already involved us in war, which must involve us in enormous expense, and which may involve us in national disaster. As I said, I believe this policy to have been long before conceived in Lord Beaconsfield's own mind, but I consider the proclamation of the Queen as Empress of India to have been the first open manifestation

of it. We know from Lord Beaconsfield himself that his object was to show the Native Princes of India that we can give our sovereign as grand a title as the Emperor of Russia, and to warn the Emperor of Russia against trifling with us in the East. If this is not Imperialism run mad, I don't know what is. But it has been followed up by more serious and mischievous steps in the same direction. By the Anglo-Turkish Convention, secretly concluded at the very moment when Great Britain was going to take part in a European Congress, we obtained possession of an unhealthy island in the east of the Mediterranean, and undertook an indefinite and shadowy protectorate of the old Turkish dominions in Asia. I defy any man to show how this nation will be the richer, or the better, or even the stronger, for this specimen of Imperialist policy. The one excuse for it might have been that Great Britain was determined to spread the blessings of peace and civilisation over Western Asia; but we have cut this excuse from under us, because we have justified the Convention on purely military grounds, and bound ourselves to retire from Cyprus altogether if Russia should ever retire from Armenia. It remains to be seen whether Cyprus is worth anything as a naval or military station, and whether we might not have done far more with the same money at Malta or elsewhere. If so, we have gained nothing. But what have we lost by this stroke of Imperialism? We have lost, not merely the enormous sums of money—and they will be enormous—required to fortify and hold Cyprus, but something far more precious: we have lost our reputation for a disinterested foreign policy before the eyes of Europe. Until we sprung this Convention upon the Berlin Congress, it was believed that England sought nothing for herself, and was only striving to make the best settlement of the Eastern Question for the benefit of Turkey and her subject-populations. It is now believed that England, under Lord Beaconsfield, is as bad as the rest of them, and that, if Turkey is broken up, we are determined to have our share of the spoils. This loss of national character would be too heavy a price to

pay for a most valuable acquisition ; but I fear we have paid for a bargain that is worse than worthless.

But this is not enough. No sooner had we recovered from our surprise about Cyprus and the Anglo-Turkish Convention, than we heard that we were almost committed, and soon afterwards that we were committed outright, to a war with Afghanistan ; and we have been told lately—again on Lord Beaconsfield's own authority—that we are not to look at this war as an Indian affair—as a movement undertaken for the defence of our Indian frontier—but rather as a part of a great Imperial policy for checking the growth of the Russian Empire in the East. I have taken much interest in this question for many years. I am old enough to remember the awful reverses of the first Afghan War. I happened to be in Calcutta during the second Sikh War, and circumstances led to my studying carefully, nearly ten years ago, several of the papers which have only just been published. Therefore, if necessary, I could deliver a long and tedious lecture on this subject ; but I am not going to do any such thing. Many of you have read the whole case in the papers, and I will simply ask you what judgment you have formed upon it. My judgment is, that it is a war of Lord Beaconsfield's and Lord Lytton's own seeking—an offensive, and not a defensive war—another stroke of aggressive Imperialism, which cannot be justified either by justice or by expediency. Some of you may remember the humorous advice of Mr. Dickens to any one who wishes to earn a cheap reputation for courage. He says you have only to wait until a row occurs, and then to single out the smallest man in the crowd, and give him a good thrashing ; for that everybody will think you chose the smallest man by accident, and would have been equally prepared to thrash the biggest. This, it seems, is what the Government have done. In saying this, I do not for a moment intend to praise the conduct either of Russia or of Shere Ali. I know perfectly well that the state of affairs in Afghanistan and Central Asia is very different from what it was in Lord Lawrence's time ; but it does not at all follow

that our policy should be different, and I firmly believe that until Russia threatens Afghanistan our strength is to sit still. Instead of Russia threatening Afghanistan, she has been very shrewdly coaxing and conciliating the Ameer; it is we who have threatened him, and are now endeavouring to thrash him into good humour. In fact, we have been playing Russia's game in Asia, as we played it in Europe. It was certain that whichever Power—Russia or England—should be first to interfere with the independence of the Afghans, would make the whole nation its enemy. Instead of waiting to let Russia do this, and then coming in as a protector, we have actually contrived to put ourselves in that odious position, with the risk that Russia may come in as a protector of the Ameer. And what can we gain? No one proposes to annex the country—that is disclaimed in the proclamation of war; and yet, if we retire from it, as we did before, we shall only leave behind us a population more hostile than before. As for a scientific frontier, that could have been obtained by treaty with the border tribes for a tenth of the cost, had it been worth obtaining; but I believe that a majority of military authorities are against advancing on the frontier at all. In short, I look upon the Afghan expedition as a gigantic blunder—like the Anglo-Turkish Convention, and, like that, a blunder directly resulting from the new policy of Imperialism.

But I protest against Imperialism on another and different ground. An Imperialist foreign policy—that is, a spirited and meddlesome policy abroad, a policy of Jingoism, as it has been grotesquely named—invariably means a feeble and reactionary policy at home; and this, I fear, is one of the reasons which make it so popular with Tory politicians. So it is in domestic life. You cannot have good economy and a well-managed household, where the wife is always meddling with the affairs of her neighbours, instead of looking after her own husband and children. And so, as history tells us, it has ever been in the political life of this country. No one who has read history can be ignorant that civil and

religious liberty has always made the greatest progress in times of peace, and that times of foreign war, however glorious—especially the whole period of that great war ending with the battle of Waterloo—have been dark and depressing periods for the cause of the people. You cannot have a spirited foreign policy and a spirited, or even a sound, home policy, at one and the same time. Look at Mr. Gladstone's Administration. Not to speak of the Irish Church and Land Acts, I maintain that such Acts as the Education Act, and the Endowed Schools Act, and the Act abolishing University Tests, and the Trades-Union Act, and the Judicature Act, and the abolition of Purchase in the Army, and the extension of Promotion by Merit to all branches of the Public Service, are enduring monuments of real statesmanship, and proofs of what may be done by a spirited Home policy, when a Government has the courage to cast aside the illusions and the imposture of a spirited foreign policy. Look at Lord Beaconsfield's Administration. What has this Government done for the people? what great measures of domestic legislation has it carried in five years of power? There were one or two useful Bills, which it found ready-made in the pigeon-holes of its offices, left there by its predecessors, and which it had the good sense to adopt. Then there was the Act called the Artisans and Labourers' Dwellings Act, but more properly described as the Towns' Improvement Act—a very good Act in its way, but one which does next to nothing for the better accommodation of working men in towns, and absolutely nothing for the accommodation of working men in the country. There was also a Bill, introduced with a great flourish of trumpets, to redress the wrongs of the publicans. Well, I leave the publicans to say how much good it did them, whether their position has been much changed, and whether they have not found out the hollowness of the promises made them at the last election. No doubt the Government did its best to reverse the Liberal policy in the Endowed Schools Bill, and the Bill for keeping up the price of meat by shutting out foreign cattle, but it was happily defeated by the

Liberals, supported, in this last case, even by the Conservative members for boroughs. If the present Ministry brings forward a more or less Liberal measure—such as Mr. Selater-Booth's measure for the better government of counties—they withdraw it the very moment that the country gentlemen get alarmed, and we hear no more about it. I say, again, look at the Statute-book for the last five years, and tell me how many measures for the good of the country have been passed. But I go further; I say, look at the Queen's Speech for the present session, and tell me how many good measures are even promised. Why, it is like a bill-of fare at a public dinner with only one course. The provision to be made for the Afghan War is the beginning and the end of it, and, so far as appears, when that war is finished—if it ever is finished—Parliament will be invited to hear grace said. To be sure, we are promised some kind of Bill for improving the system of *brakes* on railways—and no doubt a party so well versed in putting on the drag is well qualified to deal with such a question. And why have we this suspension of domestic legislation? Not because Lord Beaconsfield is not surrounded by able and honest colleagues. I believe Mr. Cross is as able and honest a Home Secretary as we have had for many years; I believe Sir Stafford Northcote, the former secretary and pupil of Mr. Gladstone, to be as anxious to keep down taxation and produce a good Budget as any Chancellor of the Exchequer can be; and there are several other members of the Government whom every Liberal must respect. The reason is, simply, that a false and pernicious idea of Imperialism—of a spirited foreign policy—has been fostered by Lord Beaconsfield, and possessed the mind of the whole Conservative Party, diverting them from any endeavour to benefit Englishmen, Scotchmen, or Irishmen, to wild schemes of foreign aggrandisement.

There is a third ground on which I must protest against this new policy of Imperialism, though it is a somewhat difficult topic for a loyal subject to handle, and this is certainly not a time when any loyal subject would have the heart to

speak disrespectfully of Her Majesty. It is only since the Queen was made Empress of India, and since Lord Beaconsfield has been made an earl, that we have been favoured with new theories of the Royal prerogative and the liberties of the people. I said 'new theories'; but I was not strictly correct, for they are in essence the same theories which the English nation rejected in the reign of Charles I., and which, though revived in a milder form by George III., were rejected again in the last two reigns. Do not let me be misunderstood; the Queen's accession was hailed by all true Liberals, as the end of all unconstitutional and disloyal attempts to shelter Ministers from responsibility under the name of the sovereign, and I quite agree with Mr. Gladstone, that while Queen Victoria remains on the throne 'Personal Government is an absurd and impossible bugbear.' No, Gentlemen, I am not afraid of 'Personal Government' in England; what I am afraid of is, that an Imperialist Minister like Lord Beaconsfield, abusing the undoubted rights of the Crown, may hurry us into secret treaties, and military demonstrations, and annexations of territory without previously consulting Parliament, and then appeal to our loyalty and patriotism not to desert the Queen in a great emergency. This is what actually happened when the Suez Canal was brought under our control, and the Transvaal was annexed, and the fleet was moved up to the Bosphorus, and the Indian troops were ordered to Malta, and Cyprus was occupied, and war was declared against Afghanistan. All these acts were done, and purposely done, without the sanction of Parliament. Of course, Parliament could have undone them, or refused the necessary supplies, but this is like shutting the stable-door after the horse is stolen. Besides, Lord Beaconsfield has succeeded in educating his party—that is his own expression—into mistaking his own will for the will of the sovereign, and imagining that a Prime Minister's business is to receive orders from the Crown, and not from the people. This process of education began in 1867, and I should like to know where it is to end. When I think of its effects on the Con-

servative Party, I am forcibly reminded of the Scotch child who asked his grandmother whether all Tories were born bad, and was informed by the old lady that he was right—that all Tories were born bad, and that they became worse by education. That is very nearly what I believe. I believe the new Toryism invented by Lord Beaconsfield to be far more dangerous than old Toryism, because it easily lends itself to an unscrupulous Imperialism, ruinous in its cost, damaging to our national character, the enemy of peace, retrenchment, and reform, and inconsistent with the liberties of the English people.

Such is Imperialism, according to my conception of it. And now, what is Liberal policy? I should not be very far wrong if I were to describe it as the exact opposite of Imperialism. But this would not be enough; for it is not merely negative—it consists in firmly and wisely carrying out Liberal principles. Some of you may, perhaps, have seen a little pamphlet in which I endeavoured, some years ago, to sum up the leading principles of the Liberal Party, and to show, very briefly, how they have been applied in late years. I never like to repeat myself, and therefore I will not go over the same ground this evening; I will come at once to what I regard as the grand and central doctrine of the Liberal creed, which strongly resembles the central doctrine of Christianity itself. This doctrine is that human happiness, in its highest and broadest sense—the happiness of men, women, and children—the happiness of all mankind, but especially of our own countrymen, and especially of the toiling and suffering masses—is the supreme end of statesmanship, just as it is the supreme end of religion and philanthropy. The man who has grasped this principle, and acts upon it in politics, is a true Liberal, whatever he may call himself. Such a Liberal will have a very simple foreign policy—a policy of peace and good-will between nations—a policy of peace, not at any price, but at the price of that meddling interference, too seldom exercised on the side of liberty, which depends on the maintenance of great armaments, which magnifies the renown of



sovereigns and statesmen and soldiers, and neglects the real, permanent interests of the people. Look at Europe, with its three emperors and six millions of armed men. Then look at America, with no emperor and only 25,000 troops, and ask yourselves which system does most to develop the resources of a country, and to promote the moral and material welfare of its inhabitants. Or compare France under the Empire, threatening all Europe with her spirited foreign policy, and France under the Republic, so rapidly recovering her strength, and becoming an object of envy to her conqueror, who was foolish enough to borrow the French Imperialism. Of course, I do not mean that we should isolate ourselves altogether from the commonwealth of nations, refuse to exercise the smallest influence on the Continent, and resolve not to strike a blow unless our own shores are attacked. But I do mean that English Ministers, being guardians to a third of the whole human race, should first consider the interests thus entrusted to them, and that in every case which has occurred during my lifetime those interests were on the side of peace.

The same principle, the same exclusive regard for the happiness of the people, is a sure guide to Liberals in Home policy. A true Liberal must ever be in favour of progress. And why? Because he knows that institutions—even the most venerable—are made for man, and not man for institutions; that nations are always growing, and that institutions must be adapted to their growth. A true Liberal must also be always on the side of liberty and self-government. And why? Because experience shows that Englishmen are the best guardians of their own interests, and, as Mr. Bright once said, ‘the people have no interest in wrong,’ which is a great deal more than can be said for privileged classes. A true Liberal must, further, be a friend of equality. I do not mean of levelling down, but of levelling up; not of destroying the natural advantages of superior ability, superior energy, or even superior birth, but of clearing away the artificial barriers which Privilege, Monopoly, and Ascendancy have

raised between man and man. I need hardly say that he will always be an advocate of political justice ; but he will also be an advocate of humanity in all its manifold applications. And why ? Because he is possessed with a profound respect for human nature, and an immutable faith in human destiny, which makes him feel a merciful sympathy, even with the most degraded races and the very outcasts of society. Lastly, he will always keep steadily in view the interest of the nation as a whole—the greatest happiness of the greatest number—even when it would be far more popular to make things pleasant all round by conciliating and bribing one powerful class after another, at the expense of the nation. I cannot enlarge to-night on this great principle of Liberal policy, but I will venture, though I know popular audiences hate the very look of a book, to read you a very short passage from the pamphlet to which I referred :—

‘ But this distinction between Liberal and Conservative ideas is more clearly marked in everyday administration than it is in legislation, and in those details of administration which are not seen than it is in those which are seen. The sinister Conservatism of modern times, which seeks to mar the effect of Liberal measures which it dares not attempt to repeal, saps the very foundations of administrative public spirit. When a Conservative Government comes into office, there is not a public servant, civil or military, from the admiral or general to the humblest sailor or private, and from the heads of departments to the lowest clerk or messenger, who does not receive the impression that strict vigilance is no longer the order of the day, that national requirements are no longer to domineer over private claims, that England no longer expects every man to do his duty, but only hopes that he will do so. The evil consequences of this impression are not felt at once. For a while it appears that it is possible for a Government to scatter and yet to increase, to serve its friends and the nation with equal fidelity, to reap efficiency without sowing purity and economy. But a time surely comes when the Estimates are mysteriously

swelled—no one can say how—and there is less than ever to show for the outlay; when the fruits of Liberal policy have been consumed; when one class after another manifests signs of disappointment; and when the nation, roused from its indolent good-nature, realises that a paramount regard for national interests is, after all, the only principle on which national interests can be permanently secured.’

And this leads me to speak very briefly of one practical difference between Imperialism, or Toryism, and Liberal policy. I mean that Imperialism is sure to be wasteful and extravagant, while a Liberal policy is always an economical policy. Now I am not one of those who make an idol of economy for its own sake; I think both in public and in private life one should know how to spend, as well as how to save: but I do maintain that sound finance and sound policy almost always go together. I never like to overstate a case, and I am not going to contend that we have to thank Imperialism alone for the present commercial depression, and the widespread distress of which we hear every day. Other causes may have contributed to produce it, but it has assuredly been aggravated very much by the spirited and restless foreign policy of the Government, discouraging commercial enterprise. And then, in the midst of this depression, we have to pay twopence extra for income tax, and shall certainly have more laid on next year to fortify Cyprus and conquer Afghanistan. I shall not inflict upon you long tables of figures; it is enough to say that, under Mr. Gladstone, taxes amounting to 12,000,000*l.* or 13,000,000*l.* a year were taken off, while more than 25,000,000*l.* of National Debt was paid off; and that under Lord Beaconsfield taxation was at first diminished, but afterwards increased, while the National Debt, funded and unfunded, is, on the whole, as great as ever. This is not an accident; it is what always used to happen under Tory Governments, even before Jingoism came into fashion. It is vain to expect economy from a Tory Government. Its natural sympathies will always be with the consumers, rather than with the producers, of taxes; its

traditional prejudices are opposed to retrenchment in the Army, Navy, or Civil Service ; and its desire to court popularity renders it incapable of resisting the manifold temptations of jobbery. Nothing is so pleasant as to be generous with other people's money, and the generosity of a Tory Government always reminds me of the man who was so much affected by a charity sermon that he plunged his hand into his neighbour's pocket, and poured the contents of it into the plate. Depend upon it, Gentlemen, a Tory Government is always an expensive luxury, and when a Tory Government takes up an Imperial policy, it is time for you to consider whether you can afford to indulge any longer in so ruinous an amusement.

But economy is not the only feature of Liberal policy ; there are plenty of reforms, yet to be accomplished, which never will be accomplished till we give up Imperialism and revert to a Liberal policy. But time warns me that I must not attempt to sketch out a Queen's Speech for the next Liberal Government. It is for this reason, and this reason alone—not because I am afraid to face such questions, but simply because I could not do justice to them in a few minutes—that I shall not dwell on the Reform of the House of Lords, or on the Church Question, or on the Liquor Question, which in other constituencies have created such unhappy divisions in the Liberal Party. But I should like to say a word or two on a few questions closely related to each other, about which, so far as I know, there is no difference of opinion among Liberals. Take, first, the County Franchise. We all know what Tories really think about measures to promote the independence of the working classes. A friend of mine once said, addressing a meeting of agricultural labourers at Woodstock—' they like the sheep to lie still while he is being shorn ' ; and there is too much truth in that expression. But what Liberal would hesitate to support the extension of Household Suffrage to agricultural labourers ? Some of us may wish that education had made a little more progress in country districts, and others may be rather afraid that labourers would vote in gangs with their landlords and employers.

But looking broadly at the matter, and after ten years' experience of Household Suffrage in towns, I believe all Liberals would vote for this measure, remembering that agricultural labourers are, after all, 'our own flesh and blood,' as Mr. Gladstone once said, and that it is, on the whole, safer to enfranchise them too soon than too late.

Take, again, a whole group of questions connected with the Land and County Government. People sometimes talk of the Land Question in the singular; but I always say we ought to talk of it in the plural, for there is no single land question in England, as there was in Ireland, and yet there are a number of land questions which call for very serious consideration. I mean such questions as the great question of Primogeniture, of which you will hear more before very long; or the Game Law Question, or the question about public rights over commons, or the much larger questions of county finance and self-government in the country parishes of England. The very mention of these questions frightens many country gentlemen nearly out of their wits, because they touch on the rights and privileges of 'property'—by which these gentlemen always mean landed property, as if this were sacred, and no other kind of property were to be put on a level with it. Therefore, you will never get a Conservative Government to deal with them effectively; but almost all good Liberals are agreed about them, and I look forward to seeing them all settled in due time by the light of Liberal principles.

I will mention but one other Liberal measure, which all must desire to see carried out—a measure connected with Education. We have done much for education in this age. We have at last got a truly national system of primary education; we have reformed the public schools and grammar-schools to a certain extent; and we have opened the Universities to young men of all creeds. But we have not organised our education from top to bottom, and I, for one, shall never be satisfied till we have so linked the various parts together that elementary schools may serve as nurseries for grammar-

schools, and grammar-schools as nurseries for the Universities, and till we have constructed a ladder of merit by which a boy of remarkable ability may rise from the very gutter to the highest preferment in Church or State. Of course, a Tory Government might do this; but, depend upon it, a Tory Government never will do this, for it might involve a considerable disturbance of educational interests, and you know Tory Governments don't like 'harassing' interests. Besides, Tories do not want labouring men to become too enlightened; that is why they were against the cheap newspaper press. A Conservative friend of mind once told me that when Lord Beaconsfield, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, was making a Budget speech, and was just going to explain what taxes he must put on to supply the place of one or two which he was taking off, a worthy county member, also a Conservative, was overheard saying to his neighbour: 'I hope to God he's going to lay a thundering tax upon knowledge!'—evidently feeling that, come what might, such a tax would never reach him.

And now, my friends, I feel that although I have by no means exhausted my subject, I must have almost exhausted you; and I have come to my last word. These last five years have been trying years for the faith of Liberals, and we must not wonder if the courage of some has faltered, and the love of others has waxed cold. Just now, in spite of the recent divisions in Parliament, the horizon looks somewhat brighter, our party is more united than it has been for some time, and there seems at last some prospect of the Conservative reaction being followed by a Liberal revival. Whether this be so or not, let me implore you never to despair of the Liberal cause. Rally yourselves again and again on the basis—the eternal basis—of Liberal principles. Let your policy be truly Imperial, but also truly Liberal. Imperial in the true sense, because it is Liberal, and Liberal in the true sense, because it is Imperial. Never forget that we have duties to perform towards our Colonies, towards India, towards other members of the great European family; but remember also, and remember above

all, that England herself is the heart of these vast dominions and this world-wide influence, and that our first concern is with the happiness and the political character of our countrymen at home. It is in vain that you have an Empire on which the sun never sets, that your flag waves over every sea, and that your voice is heard with the utmost respect in the councils of Europe, if you are not faithful to that highest and greatest mission of England, which is one and the same with the Liberal Cause—the cause of liberty, the cause of progress, the cause of justice, the cause of humanity, the cause of peace and good-will, not for this nation alone, but for all nations, and all classes, and all races of mankind.

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SPEECH ON 'HOUSEHOLD SUFFRAGE IN COUNTIES,'  
TOWN-HALL, OXFORD, MAY 31, 1884

WE are met to-night, as Liberals, for a very simple purpose, which appeals directly to Liberal sympathies. It is to support a measure which is mainly designed to give householders—that is, practically, heads of families—in counties the same franchise which has been possessed for the last fifteen years by householders, or heads of families, in boroughs. Even if this claim was a new one, even if it had no historical basis, and if Household Suffrage in counties were an innovation in the British Constitution, I think we ought to concede it, because I think it can be shown that it is sanctioned alike by justice and expediency. But those who know anything of history, know that Household Suffrage in counties is by no means a new experiment. For a full century and a half after the first House of Commons was summoned, and Parliament established as we now see it, all the freeholders in a county—not merely the 40s. freeholders, but all the freeholders—had the right of electing members; and in those days a very large number of the agricultural labourers had freeholds of their own, as I hope they may have once more

before many years have passed. But I will not go further into history in the few minutes at my disposal; nor will I anticipate the arguments which you will hear, from Mr. Arch and others, to show that householders in counties are entitled to a share of political power, and may be expected to use it wisely. On this last point I will offer but one remark, but it is one founded on my own personal experience. I have twice contested the neighbouring Borough of Woodstock—a borough in which agricultural labourers and men of the same class, like those who work in the pits at Stonesfield, form a very large part, if they do not form a majority, of the whole constituency. My first contest was in 1868, before Mr. Arch had founded the Agricultural Labourers' Union; and my second in 1874, when that Union had made great progress, especially in the district about Woodstock, which, I need not tell you, is a group of country parishes—a sort of little county in itself. Therefore, I speak of what I have seen and known, and I say deliberately here, what I have said more than once before, that in my opinion these poor men were even then—when popular education was less advanced than it is now—were even then what Mr. Gladstone has well called 'capable citizens'—that is, quite capable of giving an honest, an intelligent, and an independent vote.

People talk as if making a man an elector were the same thing as making him a member of Parliament, or even a member of the Government. If this were so—if every elector was expected to understand all the great questions of politics, like Mr. Gladstone and Lord Hartington—I should like to know how many of the present electors would deserve to possess the franchise. How many of the excellent country clergymen and country gentlemen who used to come up in crowds to vote against Mr. Gladstone in this University, and who would have voted for a hat on the top of a stick if it had been put up as a Conservative candidate—I say, how many Oxford Masters of Arts could stand a stiff examination in politics? Yet no one thinks of disfranchising them, for it may be pleaded on their behalf that a man who has no great



knowledge of politics may be quite fit to choose a member. I admit that. I go further, and I insist upon that as the very reason for enfranchising the householders in our villages. I believe that most of them are already fit, and that before long nearly all will be fit, to judge between Liberal and Conservative principles; and still more to judge between two rival candidates. They will not all be on one side. If they were all on one side, perhaps Lord Randolph Churchill would not be member for Woodstock, and perhaps I should not be Warden of Merton. They will sometimes, no doubt, be humbugged, and sometimes intimidated, and sometimes even corrupted; but all these evils, I fear, are to be found in town constituencies, and they are by no means confined to the working classes. Whatever may be the faults of the working classes, they have quite as much public spirit, and quite as high a standard of political virtue, as the classes immediately above them: and my experience leads me to believe that men who labour in the fields are quite as true Englishmen as those who labour in workshops; that they are not only 'our own flesh and blood,' as Mr. Gladstone once said, and men of like passions with ourselves, but, in the main, quiet, thoughtful, loyal, and respectable men, with a good deal of Conservatism in them, by no means likely to be carried away by revolutionary agitators, but easily guided by those whom they have learned to respect, and who have fairly won their confidence.

Even the strongest opponents of Household Suffrage in counties scarcely deny this. I have heard one of the most eminent of them candidly admit it. What they say is, that although householders in counties are personally fit to vote, there are, unhappily, too many of them; and I remember that Mr. Lowe, in opposing Household Suffrage in boroughs, quoted the saying of Curran about the fleas in an Irish hotel, which were so numerous that, if they had only been unanimous, they would have pushed him out of bed. When I hear such arguments against the extension of political citizenship to millions of my countrymen, I find it difficult not to lose all

patience. What! Am I to be told that, if the agricultural labourers were a mere handful—a few thousands in each county—their claim to enfranchisement would be granted, but that just because they are so important an element in the population they are to be kept outside the Parliamentary pale? Yet this has really been maintained; and, what is more, it has been argued that we must not extend the franchise too widely, because if we do the masses—that is, the bulk of the English people—will have all the power in their own hands. This argument forcibly reminds me of a story which I once heard about an old miser who had a great objection to washing himself, and neglected cleanliness so much that at last he fell ill, and had to send for the doctor. The doctor saw at a glance what was really the matter, but he was afraid to tell his patient the whole truth at once, and thought it better to approach the subject gradually; so he said: ‘If I were you, sir, I think I would send for a vessel of water, together with soap and a large piece of flannel; then, after rubbing the soap on the flannel, I would apply it to one part of my body after the other.’ Here the patient suddenly got a glimpse of his meaning, and called out in horror: ‘Good God, doctor, why, that’s washing!’ ‘Well, sir,’ replied the doctor, ‘it certainly is open to that objection.’ So it is with some nervous politicians when they see that Household Suffrage really means that a majority of the people will be able to return a majority of the House of Commons. ‘Good Heavens!’ they say, ‘why this is civil liberty with a vengeance; this is downright self-government; this is not aristocracy, or government by the nobles, nor plutocracy, or government by the wealthy classes; this is out-and-out Democracy, or government of the people by itself.’ Well, gentlemen, I reply, with the doctor, it certainly is open to that objection. It has actually come to this—that after six centuries of Parliamentary experience, and after more than three centuries of Protestant enlightenment, the English people, who have always been the most orderly in Europe, and will soon take rank among the most educated, are about to be trusted with

the management of their own Imperial affairs. For it is this—no more and no less—which Democracy means, and I do not envy any man who, in this sense, and to this extent, shrinks from accepting democratic principles.

But then we are told that, according to the British Constitution, Parliament ought not to represent numbers, but to consist of a balance of classes or interests, and that it would be highly unconstitutional for one class or interest to preponderate over others because it may happen to be superior in numbers. Gentlemen, I hold that a more delusive and unfounded doctrine was never propagated. I know something of constitutional history—there are gentlemen around me who know far more—and I defy any man to show me any trace in the Statute-book, or any other constitutional document, about the representation of classes or interests. It is an invention—the invention of men who have far less confidence than a true Liberal should have in the legitimate and indestructible influence, not of education only, but of birth and wealth, and all the other advantages which the so-called upper classes possess over those who are constantly engaged in manual labour. The very word ‘class’ has no fixed meaning. You may twist or turn it as you please; you may speak of capitalists as a class, and labourers as a class; but a great many labourers are capitalists—through co-operation and likewise—and a great many capitalists are practically labourers. Stupid people may be said to form a very large class in the community; are they to be specially represented by dunces? Dishonest people may be said to form a class of themselves—I hope not a very large one; are they entitled to special representation? You may call a thousand electors a class or an interest, and by giving them as much representation as hundreds of thousands, or millions, you might pack your electoral system just as you may pack a jury, and get any verdict you may wish. No, Gentlemen, the representation of classes or interests is no part of the British Constitution as it is; still less is it any part of the Constitution as it ought to be. The British Constitution gives every voter

equal rights; but it does not, and it cannot, give every voter equal power. Do what you will, you may always trust wealth to take good care of itself; and it is absurd to say that a man who employs hundreds of workpeople has no more power than one of those workpeople because he has only one vote, or that a great landlord will be reduced to a cipher because he shares the franchise with the labourers on his estate. Remember that, come what may, the mighty engines of Education and the Press must always remain in the hands of men far above the multitude in mental stature, if not in social position. The schoolmasters; and those who can write telling leading-articles, will always wield an influence far beyond that of mere numbers; and even if Democracy should trample down all other aristocratic institutions, it will never trample down the aristocracy of intellect and education. Then, again, are we really expected to believe that, because the agricultural labourers are a class, they will vote together as one man under the dictation of Mr. Arch, and that we shall have a modern edition of Wat Tyler's insurrection? No doubt Mr. Arch will continue to carry many of them with him—and they will not go very far wrong—but many others will follow very different leaders, and some of them, I fear, will be thoroughgoing Tories. The moment you come to think of it, you see how ludicrous it is to imagine two or three millions of English electors, some Churchmen and some Dissenters, some Northerners and some Southerners, some Temperance men and some the reverse, living by manual labour, scattered over the country, bound together by no social or local ties, wrapped up in their own everyday cares, and providing for their families, and yet conspiring together to rob the landlords, or the farmers, or the Exchequer.

But, Gentlemen, I have detained you too long. I have not discussed, and I am not going to discuss, the question whether Ireland should be included in the Franchise Bill, whether it should contain any provision for the representation of minorities, and whether a scheme of redistribution should form part of it. These questions I leave to other speakers,

if they should think fit to discuss them. For my own part, I take my stand on the broad principle of Household Suffrage in the counties. I hope I have shown that some of the dangers apprehended from this measure are, really, mere bugbears. But do not let us disguise from ourselves that it is a grave and serious affair to invest millions of new voters with the power of controlling the destinies of this great Empire. It does involve a certain amount of danger; but is there no danger in refusing it? Is there no danger in keeping millions of men, fathers of families, paying rates and paying taxes, outside the pale of your representative system, not without power—for you cannot deprive your whole village population of power—but without the sense of responsibility? And does the nation lose nothing in keeping so many of its citizens disfranchised. I maintain that it does: it loses the value of the political virtue and ability and loyalty which their enfranchisement would call forth. I remember the words of the poet in the last century, as he looked over the graves in a country churchyard:—

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid  
 Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;  
 Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,  
 Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,  
 Rich with the spoils of Time, did ne'er unroll;  
 Stern penury repressed their noble rage,  
 And chilled the genial current of their soul.

Well, Gentlemen, I hope that part of this reproach has been removed. We have given our country labourers access to the tree of knowledge, we have given them education in reading, writing, and arithmetic—the education of children; but we have not yet given them the education of grown men—a practical interest in the management of local and national affairs. Do not forget that our friend Mr. Arch has sprung from this very class; and none who know the country will doubt that in many a humble cottage there are men with little scholarship, but of sterling character, and with plenty

of mother-wit, capable of interpreting the wants of their fellows, and playing their part in the great work of legislation. I believe in my conscience, that by giving such men the full rights of citizenship we shall assuredly strengthen, and not weaken, the institutions of this country, and that, great as England has been in the past, she will be greater still in the future, when her Parliament represents all the heads of English households, not only in town, but in country, and not only those who practise handicrafts in workshops, but those who labour in the open fields—perhaps the noblest, as it is certainly the earliest, of human industries.

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### ADDRESS ON THE DUTY OF MODERATE LIBERALS AT THE COMING ELECTION

*Delivered at the Reform Club, Oxford, November 19, 1885*

I HAVE undertaken to address you to-night on a question which is now disturbing the minds of many conscientious men, and must be answered within the next few days—The Duty of Moderate Liberals at the coming Election.

#### *Misgivings of 'Moderate Liberals'*

Let me say at once that I use the phrase 'Moderate Liberals' under protest. I dislike labelling imaginary sections of the great Liberal Party with sectarian names—'Whigs' and 'Radicals,' 'Moderate' and 'Advanced' Liberals. When I am asked whether I am an Advanced Liberal, I generally reply that I am not; that I am an *Advancing* Liberal, and that, if I were not an Advancing Liberal, I should not be a Liberal at all. Still, we all know what is meant by Moderate Liberals in the present crisis, and why their action is anxiously watched on both sides as an omen of victory. Not only thoughtful men of a certain age, trained in the political school of Fox, or Grey, or Russell, or Palmerston, but young men whose ideas have been formed by the political writings of antiquity or of the last generation, may well be somewhat

alarmed by the new departure in politics. The franchise has suddenly been extended to some two millions of new voters, half of whom, perhaps, scarcely know their right hands from their left in the political world now opening before them, and who now find themselves courted and flattered by many an unscrupulous candidate, dependent on their favour for the highest object of his ambition. The old laws of political economy, by which the great reforms of the present century have been shaped and controlled, are openly derided by philanthropic Liberals who have never taken the pains to understand them, and some of the leading pioneers of English Democracy seem to draw their chief inspirations from Continental Socialism. Meanwhile, the differences of opinion and of sentiment, which must always exist between the so-called Whig and Radical elements in a Liberal Cabinet, have been intensified and exaggerated by the utterances of Radical politicians since the Liberal Party has been in Opposition; and there are even those who suspect Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Charles Dilke, and their adherents, not only of a deliberate intention to 'boycott' Mr. Goschen and certain Whig Peers, but of a desire to exclude themselves from the next Liberal Cabinet, with a view to establish their own paramount ascendancy in the next Liberal Cabinet but one. Though a vast majority of Liberals have confidence in the character and judgment of Mr. Gladstone, yet many—far more than would like to confess it—have not the same confidence in his firmness. They fear that, like almost all modern statesmen, he is but an Opportunist after all, and would allow his own hand to be forced by resolute colleagues of the Extreme Left. At all events, they know that he is seventy-six years of age, and they fear that if his moderating influence were removed from the Liberal councils a year or two hence, the Extreme Left would control the policy and destinies of the whole Liberal Party. No wonder that men of cautious temperament, justly believing in political *evolution*, but justly dreading political *revolution*, should hesitate to support Radical, or even Liberal, candidates, at the coming election, lest by so doing

they should imperil the Liberal cause itself, and bring about the domination, not of Mr. Gladstone, whom they still respect, but of Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke, whom they entirely distrust.

*Moderate Liberals ought, if possible, to Vote for  
Liberal Candidates*

I have stated these misgivings simply and frankly, because I hold that it is the duty of those who are Liberals by conviction to face such difficulties courageously, and because no man can dispel the honest scruples of others who cannot honestly sympathise with them. I feel and admit the force of these considerations, and of many others which might be urged in favour of neutrality—though surely not of apostasy—on the part of Moderate Liberals. Mr. Gladstone evidently feels them as strongly as I do, and doubts whether the Liberal union, which he is so earnestly promoting, can be long maintained after his own retirement from the leadership of his party. Nevertheless, I am as firmly convinced as he can be that it is the duty of Moderate Liberals to vote for Liberal candidates at the coming election, except where those candidates are men of unworthy character, or the advocates of important measures which the voter conscientiously reprobates as disastrous or immoral. I do not rest this opinion on the ground that Liberal neutrality may place a Conservative Government in power for several years to come, and that a Conservative Government means political stagnation, if not political reaction. There was a time when this was true, and when it was said, with some reason, of the Tories, that, if they moved at all, their movements were like those of the heavenly bodies—invisible to the naked eye. Assuredly no such reproach can now be levelled against them; on the contrary, the rapidity of their movements is wonderful, and, were I disposed to indulge in metaphor, I should rather be tempted to predict that, if they follow the lead of Lord Randolph Churchill, they may share the fate of that other party mentioned in Scripture, which, being possessed by evil and restless



spirits, rushed violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. It is sometimes alleged that modern Conservatives occupy exactly the same position as the Whigs of twenty or thirty years ago; in other words, that Lord Salisbury and Lord Randolph Churchill are the representatives of Lord Russell and Lord Palmerston. I deny this altogether. Lord Salisbury's attitude towards Home and foreign questions is wholly different from Lord Palmerston's, and Lord R. Churchill heartily despises the politics of Lord Russell. But I must not be led into a criticism of the Conservative Party, since it was transformed by the magic wand of the late Lord Beaconsfield. It is enough for our purpose to point out that, by withholding his vote from a Liberal candidate, a Liberal elector does not escape responsibility, much less does he stop the course of progress, and keep things as they are. What he does is to leave the guidance of an irresistible movement in the hands of Lord Salisbury and his colleagues, instead of in the hands of Mr. Gladstone and those whom he may choose to associate with him. The first question, then, which I would put to you, is the broad question whether the new Democracy is more likely to be wisely led by a Liberal or by a so-called Conservative Government.

#### *The Weakness and Strength of Democracy*

I have spoken of the new Democracy, because it is better to call things by their right names, and the effect of this last Reform Act has been to give us Democracy, and nothing else. What does this word 'Democracy' mean? It means the government of the people by the people; and now that every householder, both in town and country, has a vote, the people will actually be governed by the people, and the sooner we realise this fact, the better. It is true—and it would be well if some timid politicians would remember it—that having a vote is not the same thing as sitting in Parliament, and that sitting in Parliament is not the same thing as sitting in the Cabinet. A labouring man who is quite unfit to draw an Act

of Parliament, or to deal with the Eastern Question, may be quite fit to make an intelligent choice between Lord Valentia and Mr. Maclean, between Mr. Hall and Mr. Fyffe. Still, the electors, by choosing such representatives as they please, can ultimately direct the course of national policy, and it is therefore of paramount importance that they should themselves be wisely directed. For myself, I have never been afraid of the word 'Democracy,' and, now that we have got the reality, I await the result—with some anxiety, indeed, yet without any disloyal fears. But why? Not because I do not know the danger and the weakness of Democracy, but rather because I also know its safeguards and its strength. I have read something of history, and I have there studied the example of a perfect Democratic Republic—the Republic of ancient Athens—in which the popular will ruled supreme over all other powers in the State, and in which the sovereign assembly of the people was at once the Parliament, the Judicial Bench, and the Executive Government, appointing generals, despatching ambassadors, and performing all the functions of Ministers. That Republic was guilty of many errors, and some crimes, but it proved capable of inspiring its citizens with an heroic patriotism and a matchless public spirit; it defied in arms the greatest empire of ancient times; it has illuminated after-ages with its splendid achievements in literature and all the arts of civilisation. I have read of another Democratic Republic, of a different type—the Federal Republic of Switzerland—which has maintained its independence for centuries in the centre of Europe, repelling attack after attack from powerful neighbours, surviving the fall of dynasty after dynasty in Germany, France, and Spain, passing through revolution almost unscathed, and still presenting a model of national well-being to other countries of Europe. I know of a third Democratic Republic beyond the Atlantic Ocean, which is the political marvel of the modern world, having overspread a whole continent with Anglo-Saxon institutions and inventions, weathered a civil war in which any monarchy would probably have perished, and reconciled order

with liberty in the government of a population vaster in numbers, more various in nationality, and more divided in interest, than has ever been embraced within a single Federal Constitution.

*Tories out of Sympathy with the Democratic Movement*

With these remarkable examples before me, I cannot shrink with horror from Democracy; but I admit that it must depend for the development of its true virtues on wise and honest leadership. Now, I think I know something of my countrymen: I have faith in their good sense, and I believe that, on the whole, they will prefer the leadership, not of impostors or reckless demagogues, but of honourable men and statesmen who deserve their confidence. I maintain that such leadership is likely to be found on the Liberal rather than on the Conservative side, and I will tell you why: because there is an immense preponderance of political ability among the Liberals, and because Liberals are Democrats at heart, Democrats by principle and conscience, while the Conservatives are Democrats—if they are Democrats at all—only under the stress of necessity. Remember that until Mr. Disraeli ‘educated’ his party, as he called it, the Conservatives regarded it as their special mission to stem the tide of Democracy; and even when Household Suffrage in boroughs was conceded, they used their utmost efforts to prevent its being extended to counties. Of course, some of them now assure you that they have long been sincerely in love with it. If so, they have behaved strangely like that lady in Shakespeare who never told her love; and not only so, but they proclaimed to all the world, by their speeches and votes, that agricultural labourers were quite unfit to exercise the franchise. I do not blame them for so doing—it was an honest expression of Tory convictions; but if these be Tory convictions, what am I to think of Tory Democracy? How can the new electors regard the Conservative Party with confidence? How can the Conservative Party know how to rule or guide these democratic forces, which have been called

into action against their will, and contrary to all their old traditions? What is the Primrose League but a nice little conspiracy to bring social influences to bear on voters of the humbler class, who are treated, not as citizens, but as children, to be amused in some nobleman's park with fireworks and bands of music and merry-go-rounds, and so coaxed into voting for a Tory candidate? I ask you whether a party which relies mainly on these social influences can be trusted to conduct so perilous an experiment as governing this country on democratic principles and under democratic conditions? Is this Democracy; is this confidence in the people, is this an appeal to men's reason and patriotism? or is it merely an attempt to keep Democracy in leading-strings? I cannot forget that Conservatives have never heartily sympathised even with national education. A good many years ago, when Mr. Disraeli was making a Budget speech, and when it was clear that he must propose some new tax in place of one which he was taking off, a Tory squire was overheard to exclaim: 'I hope to God he is going to lay a thundering tax upon knowledge!'—evidently feeling that, come what might, such a tax would never reach himself. Now I admit that many Tories have now got beyond this, but I do believe that few of them desire at heart to see the English people educated like the Americans, and, like the Americans, managing their own affairs, both local and national. What they desire—and that with the best intentions—is to keep real power in the hands of the upper classes, and, in order to gain this object, they must needs make great sacrifices and offer large bribes in currying favour with the multitude, whom they regard as so many counters to be skilfully played in the game of politics.

*Tory Democracy more Dangerous than Liberal Democracy*

This is what I dread in Tory Democracy—not its alarming strength, but its alarming weakness, and the unscrupulous bids for popularity which even honourable men are driven to make under a painful sense of weakness. Nor is this a mere

speculative fear. Look at their alliance with Mr. Parnell, who has done so much to undermine the security, not of property only, but of human life in Ireland, and who tells us plainly that he is determined to separate Ireland from Great Britain. Surely this portentous confederacy of English Tories with Irish traitors, coupled with Lord Randolph Churchill's unworthy attack on Lord Spencer—the best and most high-minded of Irish Viceroy—ought to open the eyes of those who fancy that Tory Democracy would be safer than Liberal Democracy. My belief, in a word, is that, on the contrary, Tory Democracy would be less democratic, but more perilously socialistic, than Liberal Democracy, and that whatever danger there may be in mob-rule under Mr. Chamberlain, there would be much greater danger in mob-rule under Lord Randolph Churchill. No, Gentlemen, if we are to have democratic institutions, let them be worked by men who understand them; who regard the working classes, not as children or as puppets, but as grown-up citizens; who are bold in advocating the rights of the people, but who have also the courage to remind the people of their responsibilities and their duties. No man but Pericles could have induced the Athenians to undergo the privations which they did undergo in their great war against Sparta; and if demagogues should ever lash English mobs, as they have lashed French mobs, into revolutionary excesses, their violence will be checked, not by Tory Democrats, whom no one really trusts, but rather by men who have won the confidence of the masses by long devotion to the people's cause. Far be it from me to deny that Radical agitators have used language which it is in vain to justify, and held out promises which it is hopeless to fulfil, in the course of the present contest. I will go further, and admit that responsible statesmen on the Liberal side—not Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke only, but political veterans like Mr. Childers—have sometimes uttered sentiments in addressing great popular audiences which I must condemn as unstatesmanlike and unwise. But the same cannot be said of Mr. Gladstone or of Lord Hartington; and, after all, while others may

contribute most of the motive power, it is Mr. Gladstone and Lord Hartington who are likely to retain the helm of the Liberal Party in the next Parliament, unless Mr. Chamberlain and his immediate friends should assume the attitude of Irreconcilables, and refuse to join them; which I will never believe until I see it.

*Alleged Difficulties of Liberal Union; these Difficulties  
not Insuperable*

This brings me to what is naturally a favourite topic with Tory orators—the alleged dissensions in the Liberal camp, which are said to make the formation of a Liberal Government impossible. I will not stop to dwell on the amusing fact that this reproach of Liberal dissensions is repeated most loudly by the very men whom I may call the successful mutineers of the Tory Party, who openly caballed against their own leaders—including Lord Salisbury himself, who nicknamed Sir S. Northcote the ‘Grand Old Woman,’ who made his life a burden in the House of Commons, and who ultimately worried or hustled him into the House of Lords. The practical question is, whether it is true that a thorough-going Radical like Mr. Chamberlain, and a Whig, or Moderate Liberal, like Lord Hartington, or even like Mr. Goschen, cannot again serve together in the same Cabinet. Gentlemen, I say emphatically and deliberately that, in my judgment, there is no reason why all these able men and good Liberals should not co-operate together in the next Liberal Cabinet, as they have in the past. Their essential aims are the same; it is chiefly their temperaments which are different. Lord Hartington is a cautious politician, no doubt, but he is a hearty reformer; he possesses the real popular fibre under an aristocratic exterior, and he is entirely above superstition or prejudice. Mr. Chamberlain is an impulsive politician, it is true, and often resorts to expressions much stronger than I can approve; but he is a true Englishman, he is no continental Revolutionist or Socialist, he is animated by a genuine sympathy with the suffering classes, he respects an ideal far

higher than mere expediency, and he does not seriously propose the confiscation of property. You may not like his tone, but if you look closely at his actual programme, you will not find it so very monstrous after all. I do not here speak of his theoretical views about the Church, or about a Second Chamber; these are questions of the future, and the verdict of the constituencies is not challenged upon them at the present election. I speak of his views about the question of Free Schools, Local Government, and Labourers' Allotments. Now, I dare say Mr. Chamberlain himself would call me a Whig—a name of which no one who knows history need be ashamed; but I care little for names, and I am not afraid to say that I agree with Mr. Chamberlain on the principle of Free Schools, though I would apply it—and this he is willing to concede—so as not to crush those Voluntary Schools which have done so much for education. As for Local Government, I have publicly advocated for years past almost as democratic a reform as Mr. Chamberlain would desire—not as a Radical innovation, but rather as a return to a system of self-government which dates far back into Norman and Saxon times. As for allotments and small farms accessible to labourers, I think it a great pity that Mr. Chamberlain should have talked loosely about ‘ransom,’ or given any excuse for the suspicion that he would rob Peter to pay Paul; but when we have once got a good system of Local Government in rural districts, I confess that I see no reason why local authorities should not be empowered, on the same grounds and under the same conditions as railway companies, to buy up land and let it to agricultural labourers—though I fear that few will have the skill or the capital to rent farms beyond the size of large allotments. And, therefore, speaking as one who agrees with Lord Hartington rather than with Mr. Chamberlain, I see nothing outrageous in his practical schemes of reform, apart from the somewhat arrogant spirit in which he is apt to state them, and I arrive at the conclusion—with great respect for him—that his bark is worse than his bite is likely to be. I, for one, would not boycott him if I could, and, so long as he does not boycott men like

Mr. Goschen, I should cheerfully look forward to his occupying an important position in Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet.

*Prospects of the Liberal Party after Mr. Gladstone's Retirement ;  
Necessity for an Alliance between the Whigs and Radicals*

But it may be said that Mr. Gladstone is not immortal, and that, if he should be compelled to retire in a year or two, the Radical members of his Cabinet would remain masters of the position. I can only reply, that my forecast of events is entirely different. Without Mr. Gladstone, I conceive that Mr. Chamberlain's parliamentary influence would be far less than it is, and that he would need the support of Moderate Liberals more than ever. In spite of present appearances, and however strong may be the Radical impulse at this moment in the new constituencies, the great Conservative forces of the country remain in abeyance, and will surely reassert themselves. England is still, to a great extent, a nation of shopkeepers, and few shopkeepers are Extreme Radicals at heart; while there is a permanent league of reactionary influences in English society, which a Tory leader with Lord Beaconsfield's sagacity would not fail to rally. Perhaps I may venture to quote language which I used eight years ago in defending the claim of the Whigs to a place in the great Liberal Party:—'The instincts of the new commercial aristocracy, which is, in fact, a titled plutocracy, are essentially Tory; and so, it is to be feared, are those of the ignorant *prolétariat*, on whom Tory politicians place so much reliance. Is this a time for Radicals to fall out with allies who contribute the very qualities and resources in which Radicalism is signally deficient? In presence of such a coalition, can it be wise to alienate that remnant of the ancient nobility which remains faithful to its ancient traditions, which retains the old patrician art of guiding and following the national will at the same time, which has attached to itself nearly all the political experience and most of the political capacity now existing in the Liberal Party, which alone commands the confidence of that great non-political class by whose



support the fortune of elections is turned, and which alone possesses either the social or the political consistency necessary to unite a great party.' If there are a few words in this passage which I might wish to modify by the light of further observation, the lesson which I sought to impress is as true and timely as ever. Not until Mr. Gladstone disappears from the House of Commons will the jealousies, which must needs exist among his followers, be fully revealed; not until then will it be known how powerful a body of Liberals would rather join the Conservative ranks than submit to a Radical dictatorship. Even then, I believe—though Mr. Gladstone himself appears to doubt it—that a disruption of the party may be averted; but it can only be averted by moderate counsels on the part of the Radical leaders, who, if they strive to govern alone, will certainly be rejected by the country. Not that I anticipate a reaction against Democratic principles. Democratic principles must, and will, continue to prevail; but Democratic principles are not quite the same as Radical principles, and a majority of the electors will desire to see them applied in a more or less Conservative spirit. In supporting a Liberal candidate, therefore, at the coming election, Moderate Liberals needs have little fear of strengthening unduly the Extreme Left wing of their party. On the other hand, by deserting their party, and supporting a Conservative, or even by standing neutral, they may unwittingly bring about the very catastrophe which they so much dread. If the Liberal Party be seriously weakened by such desertions, either Lord Salisbury will have a majority—which is sure to be very small—or Mr. Gladstone will have a very much smaller majority than before. In either case the victory will remain, not with the Moderate Liberals, but with Mr. Parnell and his followers. It is he who will hold the balance between English parties, and I fear the temptation to purchase his aid by unworthy concessions will be too strong for the political virtue of both. This is the main reason which has convinced Mr. Goschen, as well as Mr. Gladstone himself, that it is far safer to have a great Liberal majority than a small Liberal majority, and it

is a reason which ought to carry great weight in the minds of Moderate Liberals. But I would add to this another reason. If the Moderate Liberals desert their party at the present crisis, they will inevitably lose their hold on their party, and the control of it will pass into the hands of Extreme Radicals. The first effect of this, no doubt, would be to give the Tories a renewed lease of power; but the ultimate effect would be very different. It would be the gradual creation of a new Democratic Party, unlike any yet seen in England, but such as forms the material of what is called 'the Revolution' in foreign countries, restrained by no reverence for the past and no statesmanlike foresight of the future, hostile to every established institution, and animated by a fierce hatred, not of birth only, but of wealth and culture. Whether this party would prevail, no man can foresee, but the struggle between it and the present governing classes would convulse England, and the reproach of having brought on this struggle would rest with the Moderate Liberals who timidly despaired of the Liberal Cause at the General Election of 1885.

*Duty of Moderate Liberals to enforce Moderation  
in Party Action*

At the same time, while I advise Moderate Liberals to stand by the Liberal colours, I cannot advise them to be passive instruments of out-and-out Radicals. As we have seen, one of the strongest motives for their continuing to be loyal members of their party is that they may retain an effective voice in its councils. It is a delusion to suppose that moderate views cannot be held as earnestly as extreme views, or that words of soberness cannot be spoken before popular audiences as impressively as violent appeals to passion and to prejudice. The Liberal Party has owed its past triumphs chiefly to one fact—that truth and justice have been on our side. Then let us be careful, above all things, to keep truth and justice on our side. The best service that Moderate Liberals can render to their party is to set themselves resolutely against Opportunism—that is, the sacrifice of principle to expediency—

and to insist on a full and dispassionate consideration of proposed reforms, before the whole credit and power of the party is committed to them. Such a service has been rendered by Mr. Goschen, and, in spite of his past heresies on Household Suffrage, I should consider his exclusion from the next Liberal Cabinet nothing less than a national misfortune. Mr. Goschen is faithful to Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Gladstone has put forth three or four reforms of the first magnitude, which it will require the concentrated energies of the Liberal Party to carry through. Moderate Liberals have a right to demand, not that nothing else shall be attempted in this Parliament, but that no candidate supported by them shall pledge himself publicly to organic changes, not comprised in this programme, of which they disapprove. I cannot advise a conscientious adherent of the Established Church to vote at the coming election for a candidate pledged to Disestablishment; or a conscientious adherent of the Union with Ireland to vote for a candidate pledged to Home Rule, or something equivalent to it; or a conscientious adherent of a Second Chamber to vote for a candidate pledged to the abolition, as distinct from the reform, of the House of Lords; or a conscientious adherent of economical justice to vote for a candidate pledged to schemes of philanthropic robbery, even if they are disguised under the specious name of 'restitution.' All these questions, except the last, are proper subjects for political discussion, and may possibly come before the constituencies for decision in the lifetime of some here present. But they are not before the constituencies now, and the attempt to prejudge them without a full and solemn discussion of them on their merits ought to be sternly resisted, not merely by those Liberals who are opposed to them on principle, but also by all Liberals who pretend to statesmanship. This specially applies to the State Church. The English people, who established the Church of England, have a right to disestablish it; and this right, according to constitutional usage, may be legitimately exercised by a majority of the English people. But it cannot be legitimately exercised by a bare majority of that majority—

being a minority of the whole nation ; nor is it to be tolerated that a verdict, obtained on other issues, should be held to decide the fate of an institution which fills so grand a space in English history, and is so closely bound up with the structure of English society.

*Foreign and Colonial Policy*

Let me add one word upon Foreign policy ; and here I am happy to adopt the language of Mr. Fyffe's Address. Like him, 'I have uniformly expressed my disapproval of the Egyptian policy of Mr. Gladstone's Government.' Like him, while I regard the warlike spirit with much the same horror as Mr. Bright, 'I cannot hold with those who, in their just sympathy with the pressing needs of our poorer population, and in just resentment at those wasteful and unnecessary enterprises which have at times discredited our history, would withdraw their attention altogether from foreign affairs.' Still less am I prepared to withdraw it from colonial affairs, and to speak as though I was ashamed of the British Empire. I like to know and to realise that, travel where I may—in Asia, in Africa, in America, or in the isles of the Pacific Ocean—I cannot travel far without seeing the Union Jack floating over some peaceful and prosperous settlement of my countrymen, with English faces, English manners, English ideas, English religion, and English laws, talking of England as their home, cherishing equally the English sentiments of loyalty and of liberty, and speaking that familiar but noble language which is the glorious birthright of the English race. I say, let your policy be truly Imperial, but let it also be truly Liberal. Imperial, in the true sense, because it is Liberal, and Liberal, in the true sense, because it is Imperial. But are these feelings singular, are they confined to Tories and Whigs, Are they not professed by Mr. Fyffe, are they not shared by the great mass of Radicals, and—so far as they understand foreign and colonial politics—by the newly-enfranchised electors? I believe that they are. I believe that, whatever errors may have been committed during the

last five years, have been, in the main, errors of personal judgment, which Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet failed to check, but for which no one section of the Liberal Party has been responsible, and to which the Conservative Party has largely contributed. It is no secret that Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke are favourable to what is sometimes called a spirited foreign policy; and though some other Radicals hold narrower views of England's mission in the world, I am persuaded that such views will not prevail with the new Democracy. If I have any fear, it is rather the fear that, under a democratic impulse, the masses of the people, who cannot spare the leisure to master great and difficult questions of foreign and colonial policy, may nevertheless insist upon exercising a direct control over them, and put too little confidence in the statesmen who must be specially entrusted with their management. I have always held that Mr. Gladstone erred, and established an evil precedent, by appealing to indignation-meetings against what he considered the unrighteous policy of Lord Beaconsfield in Eastern Europe; not so much because the resolutions of those meetings were somewhat passionate and one-sided, as because those who passed them had not, and could not have, the knowledge necessary to justify a decided opinion. This is a danger against which it will be right to guard under a more democratic system of government, but I do not apprehend that even a Radical Ministry—even if it be influenced by a Radical caucus in the background—will be disposed to put up with national humiliation, or to trifle with the honour of the country.

*Not only the Future, but the Past, belongs to the Liberal Party*

And now I have come to my last word. Let me earnestly warn Moderate Liberals against lightly dissociating themselves from the great future already within our view; but let me also earnestly warn Advanced Radicals against lightly breaking with the great history and traditions of the Liberal cause. Call ourselves what we may, let us never forget that, if we are Liberals at all, we are members and heirs of that illus-

trious party to which England mainly owes its freedom and its character. Let us never be ashamed of our past. Let us never allow our Tory friends to assume that, because the future belongs to us, the past is their inheritance. No, Gentlemen, we claim the future, it is true; but we claim the past also. Modern Toryism—the Toryism of Lord Randolph Churchill and the Primrose League—is but a thing of yesterday, the invention of Lord Beaconsfield and a few clever associates. To us Liberals, and not to our opponents, belong all the glorious memories of English constitutional history, from Magna Charta to the Reformation, from the Reformation to the Revolution, from the Revolution to the first Reform Act, and from the first Reform Act to the last. Our principles are still the same as ever; they are those for which our forefathers lived and died—the principle of Freedom, civil and religious; the principle of political, if not of social, Equality; the principle of Progress, the principle of Justice, the principle of Humanity, the principle of Peace and Goodwill to men. These are not principles cunningly devised by political wirepullers to serve political ends—they are, in truth, nothing but the principles of Christianity applied to modern politics. They rise higher than electioneering cries, they lie deeper than mere party motives. By the light of these principles, we have made England the great model of order, based on liberty, to all foreign nations, and braved in safety all the storms which have desolated other countries of Europe. By the light of these principles, we shall know how to deal with the great social questions which now remain to be solved: to organise Democracy without Communism; to reconcile the rights of property with the greatest happiness of the greatest number; to hasten the advent of that brighter day reserved, as Liberals believe, in the fulness of time, for the toiling and suffering masses of mankind.

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SPEECH FROM THE CHAIR AFTER A BANQUET TO  
MR. F. W. MACLEAN, M.P., AT WOODSTOCK, ON  
FEBRUARY 3, 1886.<sup>1</sup>

THE CHAIRMAN, who was heartily received, said this friendly gathering of Woodstock Liberals reminded him of old times. This was not the first time that he had addressed an audience of Woodstock Liberals in that Hall; it was not the first time that he had occupied the chair; but it was certainly the first time that he had occupied it on so happy and auspicious an occasion—for the purpose of rejoicing with them, and welcoming a Liberal Member for what was still called the Woodstock Division of Oxfordshire. As he looked around him, and saw so many familiar faces of Woodstock Liberals, little altered by time, and when he also found himself supported by their old friend, Mr. Mitchell Henry, whose name was once a household word at Woodstock, his mind naturally travelled back some twenty-one years, to a time when the young men who had just come of age were in their cradles or perambulators. Mr. Mitchell Henry then came forward—in 1865—on the retirement of Lord Alfred Churchill, to maintain, not only the Liberal cause, but the independence of their Borough. He need not tell them that he did so manfully. In 1868, he came forward himself, and he well remembered that at first he was saluted with cheers for Mitchell Henry, just as if, notwithstanding some little difference in their figures and features, he must be the same person; or, at all events, if he was not Mitchell Henry, the electors believed—and perhaps they were not far wrong—that he came in the spirit and power of Mitchell Henry.

That was a memorable contest. It attracted attention, not in this country only, but in foreign countries, and he, for one, felt that he was fighting before the eyes of all his countrymen. It was not that Woodstock was a large constituency; it was not that he was a candidate of great political reputation: it was that great principles were at

<sup>1</sup> Abridged Report from the "Oxford Chronicle."

stake—the right of electors to return a candidate of their own choice, without consulting a great Duke whose place happened to be close by, and the capacity of agricultural labourers to exercise the franchise. When he was about to come forward, either then or in 1874, someone asked him casually whether he was not going to become a candidate for Blenheim. That was a very odd mistake to make—at least, so he thought; but the worst of it was that he found half the world was under the same impression—they fancied that the member for Woodstock was a representative of Blenheim Palace. Well, Mr. Mitchell Henry, and he afterwards, and Mr. Hall, and Mr. Corrie Grant, did their best to dispel that impression, and on that occasion they all but succeeded. Indeed, he could not help saying that if their good friend, Sir H. Dashwood, had not broken his arm, and if one or two other friends of theirs, who should be nameless, had plucked up a little more courage, instead of hanging back like those of whom they read in Scripture, who, being harnessed and carrying bows, turned themselves back in the day of battle—if they had plucked up a little more courage, and if they had then had the Ballot, he would have been their member—not member for Blenheim—and Mr. Barnett would have returned to his business in the City and the bosom of his family.

Five or six years elapsed, and there came another election in 1874. It took them all by surprise, and found the Woodstock Liberals without proper organisation, while the Conservatives brought out a man—then a young gentleman of little experience, but who had since made his mark in politics, and was the strongest possible candidate for Woodstock—he meant Lord Randolph Churchill. At first there was a proposal to bring forward Mr. Joseph Arch against him, but Mr. Arch withdrew in his favour, and he received an unanimous invitation to contest the seat. He believed they did as much as mortal strength could do within ten days, but the enemy was too strong for them; there were some desertions from their ranks, and they were defeated by a large majority. The other day he was surprised to learn from the newspapers



an entirely new fact about that election. He found it stated, on the high authority of Lord Randolph Churchill, that they, all of them, went about promising the agricultural labourers nice slated houses, with boarded floors and fertile gardens—all for nothing—if they would only vote for him. Of course, Lord Randolph was not serious, and only let his imagination run away with him just to amuse his audience. But it so happened, that in that election he was specially careful to caution his village audiences, in every speech, against expectations of this kind; and when he found that, in spite of this, he was so grossly misrepresented, he knew how much to believe of all those stories about ‘three acres and a cow’ studiously circulated by the Primrose League against Liberal candidates at the last election.

But let them go back to the history of Woodstock. Then came the election of 1880, when Mr. Hall stood for Woodstock; and a very good fight he made, though he could not dislodge Lord Randolph. Four years later—he thought in 1884—a little incident occurred which he could not pass over, when their old member, Lord Alfred Churchill, volunteered his services, and attended a meeting here. Perhaps the less said of what followed the better. It was really like a conjuring-trick. One sees an object on the table, and then by some *hocus-pocus* it is gone, and no one knows what has become of it. He could not explain the sudden disappearance of Lord Alfred Churchill; he could only suppose that it was all arranged quietly behind the scenes in some back room of a palace which he would not mention, where they and he were not present. He should be very sorry to speak unkindly of Lord Alfred, but he suspected that he had not quite realised what a serious and earnest business it was to contest this Borough of Woodstock: how many rough knocks one must be prepared to receive, and that one must not be too much afraid of offending Dukes or Duchesses either, but must throw oneself heartily upon the people. However, it did not much signify, as Woodstock was to be disfranchised; but it so happened that Lord Randolph had to apply for re-election,

and Mr. Corrie Grant bravely and honourably came forward to oppose him. He had nothing to do with this last contest, and perhaps he should not have advised it; but he felt bound to state publicly, what he had often stated privately, that he considered it to have been perfectly legitimate and justifiable, and that his sympathies were then, as ever, heartily with the Liberal cause at Woodstock.

And this brought him to last November, when the Borough of Woodstock ceased to exist, but when Mid-Oxfordshire, of which Woodstock was the heart and centre, was contested and carried by his friend Mr. Maclean. In his own farewell Address, issued in 1874, he used these words: 'I look hopefully to the progress of education, and especially of political education, as the one efficacious antidote to such influences as still predominate in the Borough. A few years hence, when the labourers shall have learned to realise the value of their political rights, and to organise themselves for political action, the battle which I have twice fought may probably be renewed with better prospects of success, and Woodstock may at last be represented by a Liberal member.' Now, he thought he might claim the credit of having been a true prophet, for that prediction was verified that night. And how had this result been achieved? He would speak for his friends, Mr. Mitchell Henry and Mr. Maclean, for he knew they would support what he was going to say. It had chiefly been accomplished by a small band of determined men and earnest Liberals—several of whom he now saw near him—who, with unshaken fidelity and undaunted courage, through evil report and good report, through disaster and defeat, had carried aloft the old Liberal flag, and never rested until they planted it in the centre of the enemy's position. Their spirit and example encouraged poor men, dependent on Conservative landlords and Conservative employers, to sacrifice much for the Liberal cause; and he had always borne witness that great sacrifices were made and great risks incurred by the Liberal Woodstock labourers without the smallest hope of reward. But they must not forget another very important

element of success—he meant the energy and ability of the candidate. It was no easy task to select a candidate for their Division, and they all knew the immense labour which any candidate for a county division must now undergo. In Mr. Maclean they found a man who combined the qualities of head and heart—yes, and of bodily vigour—required to command success. No doubt he possessed two great advantages—the active support of Sir Henry Dashwood, and the honourable neutrality of the Duke of Marlborough; but the great body of the country gentry and of the parochial clergy were against him. He believed that still more would have been against him if Mr. Maclean had mingled less discretion with his political valour. Happily, they had in him a man who knew how to measure his words—to clothe reasonable and moderate opinions in vigorous language—and that is the way to win and to deserve the confidence of the masses. And so he won the seat, and so they were all there that night to congratulate him. Perhaps Mr. Mitchell Henry and he might envy him a little, but with no ungenerous jealousy; for they might well console themselves, as good soldiers ought, with the conviction that they did something towards paving the way for his success, and that, although they fell in the breach, yet they did not fight in vain, for over their prostrate bodies their comrades were steadily marching forward to victory.

Now let him tell them that he was not going to make a speech about politics. It was not an electioneering meeting. Thank heaven! their work was done, and if politics were to be talked, it should rather be talked by the sitting member and other members of Parliament. But he could not stand before such an audience at such a time without saying a few earnest words about Ireland—a subject to which he had devoted great attention, and which just now overshadowed all other questions in politics. He could not pretend to speak with the same authority as Mr. Mitchell Henry, who had lived there so long, and done so much for the people; but he was connected by family with Ireland. He had some Irish

blood in his veins—just about as much as they like to have in a horse. He had studied Irish history more carefully than most Englishmen, and he had seen much of Irish government. Let him, then, express the earnest hope—without presuming to advise Mr. Maclean—that he would exercise his own independent judgment on this question—the question of Home Rule—and that they would leave him free to do so. It had never been submitted to the country, the leaders of the Liberal Party were notoriously divided upon it, and if he was in Parliament, he would consider it his right and duty to vote upon it according to his own conscience. He did not say that he would refuse to consider any scheme of self-government for Ireland that might be proposed—that would be wrong—but he did say that he would firmly resist any scheme amounting to what was now called Home Rule, being convinced that Home Rule meant the severance of Ireland from Great Britain, and that the severance of Ireland from Great Britain meant little short of national ruin. Let them not believe half what they were told about Ireland by persons who knew nothing of Irish history and Irish character. It was false that all the evils and faults of Ireland were the result of English misgovernment. Those evils and faults were rampant when Henry II. became nominal lord of Ireland, and they continued to be rampant for three hundred or four hundred years, when Ireland practically enjoyed Home Rule, and the English Parliament never meddled with it. No doubt, under the strongest provocation, after one of the most brutal massacres recorded in history, tyrannical measures were passed by the English Parliament some two centuries ago; but they were repealed a century ago, and since the Union, in 1800, English policy towards Ireland had been guided by the sincerest desire for the good of the country. Whatever civilisation, whatever good institutions, Ireland possessed, it owed to England, and, but for England, it would be far more backward and disorderly than it actually was. The fact was—and it was vain to ignore it—that Irishmen have not yet learned the alphabet of political education, and that

Ireland is infinitely less fit for Home Rule than any other portion of Her Majesty's dominions. If they wanted to know what true Home Rule would be in Ireland, let them look at the elective bodies which already existed there—the Town Councils and Boards of Guardians. He heartily congratulated Woodstock on the prospect of obtaining a truly representative Corporation, and no one doubted that it would manage their affairs well and honestly, like other English Town Councils and public bodies. In England, these bodies worked well, because in Englishmen they could always rely on a spirit of fair-play and public spirit and courage—the great political virtues. In Ireland these virtues were wanting, and the consequence was, that Irish Town Councils and Boards of Guardians were too often nests of jobbery, rowdiness, and sedition. How could it then be wise, how could it be otherwise than reckless, to establish Home Rule on a large scale, when it had so utterly and disastrously failed on a small scale? He believed, on the contrary, that, quite apart from English interests, no measure so fatal to Ireland could be devised, and that if they granted it, at the dictation of the conspiracy which now dominated Ireland and demoralised the House of Commons, the next generation of Irishmen would rise up and curse them—and with much better reason than ever before.

But he would not add another word on this subject, and would not have ventured to speak of it at all if it were not so urgent and engrossing, and if he were not addressing an audience specially representing the new voters. It was true that they had already had some political experience, and that was why they should give an example of wisdom and moderation to other constituencies of the same class which had had no such experience. He confessed that he almost trembled when he reflected that this great Imperial question—the greatest and most vital that had arisen in his lifetime—would have to be decided by the new Democracy, for he could hardly believe that it could be finally decided without a fresh appeal to the constituencies. If that were so, they would have to

share with Mr. Maclean the guidance of national policy at this great crisis. It was, indeed, a fearful responsibility, and he would implore them to prepare themselves for it in a conscientious spirit; for those were no true friends of the people who were always speaking to them of their rights and of their interests, but never spoke to them of their duties or of their responsibilities. Some of those present might be veterans in politics, and a little too much inclined to rest content with past triumphs of Liberal policy; while others might be young recruits, and a little too much inclined to frame grand schemes of future reform. To the one he would say, 'Do not look too far forward'; to the other, 'Do not look too far back.' It was with the present they had to deal. They could not recall or undo the past, and they could not foresee the future; but the present time was theirs, and the character of England was now in their keeping. It was theirs—it was their highest privilege and their bounden duty—to understand and to grapple with the difficulties of their own times, to guard the destinies of this country and this Empire as a sacred birth-right and a solemn trust—so to labour in this their day, and so to improve the talent committed to them, that they might hand down this precious inheritance to those who came after them, whole and entire, with undimmed lustre and undying renown.

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SPEECH AT A JUBILEE COMMEMORATION MEETING  
IN THE OXFORD TOWN-HALL, ON FEBRUARY 26,  
1887.

MR. MAYOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—It is with great pleasure, but with some diffidence, that I rise to support this resolution. It is no light task to follow so eloquent a speaker as Mr. Hall, especially when he has the advantage of being so well known and so justly respected as an old citizen and as your member. But let me tell you that I have one advantage over him, for I am old enough to remember seeing the Queen as Princess Victoria, and when the election took place on her accession, I

was decked out in Tory colours, and cheered the Tory candidates with a vigour which I am sure would have gratified Mr. Hall. No sovereign that has ascended the throne of England was ever the object of so many bright hopes; no accession ever excited such a thrill of loyal expectations. The generation then living remembered the horrors of the French Revolution, and the long reaction that followed it, and the exhausting strain of the Great War, and the constant increase of popular discontent up to the desperate crisis of the Reform Bill, and even for some years after it. They remembered also the sad derangement of George III., and the sad corruption of manners under George IV.: and the whole nation looked forward to a Golden Age under its young Queen, whose simple habits and conscientious devotion to duty were appreciated, as they deserved, from the very first. Perhaps they expected too much from her—more than she could have done if she had been endowed with all the wisdom of Solomon, more than our Constitution allows any sovereign to do. But, upon the whole, these fifty years of the Queen's reign have been as glorious and as prosperous as any reasonable man could have imagined. Our fathers were not far wrong in their hopeful prediction. A good time was coming, though it was not quite the good time for which they looked. Other thrones have been overturned or shaken by revolution, but ours has remained unshaken, firmly based on the affections of the people. Other countries of Europe have been desolated by foreign invasions, but ours has never even been threatened, unless once, and then hardly in earnest—on the occasion which gave the first impulse to the Volunteer movement. But this is not all. With one exception—I mean the great age of the Reformation and Queen Elizabeth—the reign of Queen Victoria has been, in the best sense, the most progressive in the whole history of England. Our Colonial Empire has immensely increased in extent—while it has increased far more in population. The whole of India has been brought under the control, most of it under the direct government, of the British Crown. The extension of railways

and electric telegraphs, the introduction and development of the Penny Post, the marvellous advance of science and the industrial arts, the impulse given to education in all its branches, the increased command of luxuries by the rich and of comforts by the poor, which has been the result of Free Trade, the growth of the Newspaper Press—these are but a few among the evidences of national progress which history will record as distinctive of this memorable age. Other half-centuries may have witnessed more signal triumphs of our arms by sea and by land; other half-centuries may have produced rarer works of original genius, and more names of enduring renown. But this is certain—that no similar period has ever witnessed an equal advance in that which, after all, is the supreme end of Government, far above the highest achievements of military glory or of literary fame—I mean the well-being of the people at large, the happiness of the men, women, and children who compose the English nation. With this great movement in popular civilisation, as I may call it, the name of Queen Victoria will ever be associated. She could not shape the course of national policy—that is forbidden by our Constitution—but she has done what she could, by her example and by her influence, to strengthen all that is best in English society and in English character—

Wearing the white flower of a blameless life  
In that fierce light which beats upon a throne.

Though she has never courted popularity unworthily, it has always been well known in every cottage of the land that the Queen is a true woman—a good wife, a good mother, and a warm friend—with boundless sympathy for the sorrows of others; and not only so, but with a special interest in the relief and elevation of the toiling and suffering classes. That is the secret of her popularity, and that is the highest kind of popularity which a constitutional sovereign can desire. And now, I suppose that we have all had our own notions about the proper way of celebrating this Jubilee, and the proper objects for a subscription. Perhaps I could have drawn up a model scheme, and so could many of those whom



I address ; but I must say that I think the scheme before us, which is that of the Town Council, is very well devised, because it commemorates three of the greatest and most beneficent features of the Queen's reign—the growth of our Colonial Empire, the spread of education, and, as a consequence of education, the gradual softening and disappearance of class-distinctions and class-jealousy. Our proposed subscription to the Imperial Institute will fitly represent our desire—not to weaken, but to strengthen the bond of union between Great Britain and that Greater Britain whose shores are washed by the northern and southern oceans, which embraces at least one-fourth of the human race, and which has been, not only vastly extended, but vastly consolidated during the last fifty years. I know that some of our friends look timidly on this Imperial rule ; they are nervously afraid of our becoming too great. I do not share these fears. I like to know that, while Great Britain itself is but a speck upon the map of Europe, it was colonised and peopled by the most warlike and energetic races that rose upon the ruins of the Roman Empire. When I think of England, I think not only of a weather-beaten island in the Atlantic Ocean—I think also of the mighty peoples who have issued from this island, and are proud to own its supremacy. My eye travels in fancy over the vast territories stretching across the American continent far into the Arctic circle, over the British possessions in the West Indies and South America, over the group of British Colonies in South Africa, over the whole continent of Australia, with New Zealand, and many a fertile island in the Pacific Ocean ; I include in my estimate of British dominions the swarming millions of India ; and I remember that the same Power which holds all these splendid provinces in the northern and southern hemispheres, holds also the keys of the Mediterranean Sea. Such is our Colonial Empire, and I welcome the Imperial Institute as an outward and visible sign of that closer union with our Colonies which I earnestly desire to promote. But I am not less interested in the other objects as specified in this resolution. If I do not

speak of the Radcliffe Infirmary, it is because its claims are present to all of us, and far be it from me to say a word that might divert contributions from it. But I will venture to bespeak your consideration for the other two schemes here recommended. These comprise a subscription to a Public Library and Reading-room, as well as to a building for a School of Science and Art. If that plan be adopted, it will have a twofold connection with the Jubilee. It will mark our sense of the national benefits which have already resulted from the great educational movement of our times, and it will also mark our sense of the necessity for a great improvement in technical education, if we are to hold our own in the commercial race. But it will do more. It will, further, show that we value that diffusion of knowledge and of ideas among all classes—that intellectual freemasonry, if I may call it so, which, next to Christianity, is the best antidote to mistrust and enmity between class and class. That is the experience of our great Universities. Nowhere else is there so happy a combination of true Aristocracy with true Democracy, nowhere else does personal merit count for so much, and the flimsy barriers of rank and wealth and position for so little. And that is one reason why I am delighted to see University men co-operating with townspeople on this memorable occasion. I heartily support this resolution because I am a thorough-going Unionist, and because it invites us to cultivate union in several practical ways. I support the Imperial Institute because it will help to unite the mother-country and Colonies. I support the Public Library and School of Art because it will help to unite persons of different classes, but of the same tastes and aspirations. I support the principle of a joint subscription because it will help to unite the City and University. And I now call upon you to support it, in the firm belief that, if you do support it liberally, it will be a most appropriate and enduring memorial of the Queen's Jubilee in this old City of Oxford.

THE REAL MEANING OF 'HOME RULE' AND  
OF 'COERCION'

*Abridged Report of a Speech delivered at Bath on November 4, 1887, and  
republished by the Liberal Unionist Association*

THE HON. GEORGE BRODRICK seconded a resolution in support of the Government. It was a special pleasure to him to invite them to pass a vote of thanks to Mr. Goschen, for no man had more consistently opposed the policy of disruption and lawlessness to which Mr. Gladstone and his followers were now unhappily committed. No man had more conscientiously grappled with the difficulties—and they were enormous—of this Irish Question. No man had more fearlessly confronted Mr. Gladstone himself in debate, or more effectively opposed his specious fallacies. The speech they had heard from him that night breathed the same spirit of calm determination; and it was in that spirit alone that the Unionists could hope to maintain the great interests entrusted to their charge. The resolution before him committed the meeting to support the Government 'in all measures requisite for the safety of the Union.' But then Mr. Gladstone told them that the Union was in no danger; he even claimed to be a Unionist—only, he said, it must not be a paper Union, but an union of hearts. An union of hearts, indeed! As if any union of hearts were possible between loyal subjects of the Queen, cherishing the law of the land as a sacred inheritance of Englishmen, and those whom Mr. Gladstone mistook for the Irish nation—the leaders and the agents of that accursed conspiracy, supported and organised by the foreign enemies of Great Britain, which had not shrunk from deeds of bloodshed shocking to humanity, which even now threatened us with fresh outrages and with foreign intervention, and which had been only too successful in demoralising, not Irish peasants only, but English statesmen.

*The Dead Home Rule Bill*

But let that pass, and let him fix their attention on one point. It was this—that whereas only about a year ago they were assured that Mr. Gladstone considered his Home Rule Bill as dead, and that he was quite free to entertain suggestions from Liberal Unionists, they now learnt from his Nottingham speeches, and from the more outspoken utterances of Sir William Harcourt, that, on the contrary, all the essential principles of that Bill were still alive, and that he had not the smallest intention of modifying it to suit the views of Liberal Unionists or any one else. Really there was something comical in this attempt to resuscitate this dead Home Rule Bill. It reminded one very forcibly of the Irish gentleman who enjoyed himself so much at a funeral feast that he was moved to get up and propose the health of the corpse.

*Where are the 'Concessions'?*

The fact was, that Mr. Gladstone had made no concessions whatever in any essential principle of his Bill. It was all very well for Sir George Trevelyan to lecture them upon their wickedness in not accepting the supposed concessions. All he could say was, that you might search Mr. Gladstone's own speeches in vain for any concession which could have been accepted by any Unionist less pliable than Sir George Trevelyan. It was, as the American said, like looking for a black hat on a very dark night, when it was not there. As Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen had pointed out, Mr. Gladstone is as willing as ever to hand over the control of the police and the whole administration of the law to those very men whom it is the chief duty of the law to punish, and, if need be, to crush. And that for the best of all reasons. It is with these men that he has made his bargain, and they will hold him to it; and these men are themselves under the orders of their paymasters in America, who will be content with nothing short of national independence for Ireland, which means, of course, Ireland's separation from England,

or, as they said, 'the harp without the crown.' Let them read an important letter on this point which recently appeared in the 'Times.' They would there find that, at the Chicago meetings held last August, Mr. Gladstone's pretence of making the Irish Parliament nominally subordinate to the Imperial Parliament was repudiated with scorn. He must confess that, looking at the matter from their point of view, he was disposed to agree with them. Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule was nothing but Separation by a lingering process; and if they were to have Home Rule at all—which God forbid—he would rather have it out and out, under its own proper name.

### *Ireland's Debt to England*

He would now say a very few words on the next point mentioned in the resolution—the maintenance of law and order in Ireland—which seemed to him directly connected with the last point—the promotion of necessary reform in Ireland. He believed in his conscience that the restoration of law and order was the most necessary, as it would be the most beneficent, of all Irish reforms. He did not know how many of his audience might have been in Ireland, or how much they might have read of Irish history. He would venture, however, to appeal to them, as one who had some Irish blood in his veins—just about as much as one likes to have in a horse—as one who began his Irish studies earlier than Mr. Gladstone, and as one who had seen a great deal of Ireland and Irish government, not to believe one-half of what were called facts about Ireland, given by men who knew nothing about the country or Irish character, and who seemed incapable of seeing anything which did not serve their own purpose. He ventured to assert that Ireland never was a nation until we made her so, that every sound and liberal institution which Ireland enjoyed was obtained from Great Britain, and, what was more, that, with one exception, an Irishman enjoyed almost exactly the same liberties as we did in England. He defied any man to show him any liberty (except one) enjoyed by Englishmen which was not also fully

enjoyed by Irishmen. Was it the right of voting? Why, Irish householders had exactly the same franchise as English householders; not that any sane man thought them equally fit for it, but that Parliament scrupled to refuse it simply because Ireland was, and was to remain, an integral part of the United Kingdom. Was it the right of public meeting? Why, at this moment seditious meetings were being held all over Ireland, and the speakers could say what they liked, however outrageous, so long as they did not incite the people to break the law. Was it the liberty of the Press? Why, the Nationalist Press of Ireland was the most audacious and mendacious and scurrilous in all Europe, and articles appeared in it every day which no other Government would tolerate. Was it trial by jury? Well, that no doubt had been restricted—not abolished—in certain specified cases under the Crimes Act. And why? Because juries were intimidated out of doing their duty by the National League, and because it was worse than vain for men charged with agrarian outrages to be tried before a jury of their own accomplices. An Irish judge used to tell a story which put this in an amusing light. A petty jury had been allowed to retire for lunch, and when they returned he invited them to resume work, saying, ‘Gentlemen, take your places’; whereupon they all, with one consent, and as if they were used to it, rushed into the prisoners’ dock. But there was one liberty, he admitted, which the Irish Nationalists did not possess, and which he trusted they would never obtain—it was the liberty of exercising an unlimited power of coercion. This word was often used as if it were ‘coercion’ to enforce the law, and to put men in prison who defied it. Perhaps that was the opinion of all the rogues and thieves in Somersetshire, but that was not the opinion of honest men.

#### *Irish Coercion*

He would tell them what Irish coercion really meant. It meant the organised assassination, not so much of rich men, as of poor men following their lawful calling. It meant the

midnight visits of bloodthirsty ruffians to shoot down and torture decent farmers, in the presence of their wives and families, merely because they had paid their rent or held land from an obnoxious landlord. It meant the ruin of poor shopkeepers and small tradespeople, because they would not throw over their best customers. In short, it meant a reign of terror, disgraceful to a civilised land, which these gentlemen wanted to establish under the name of Home Rule. When he saw Mr. Gladstone—the very man who imprisoned Mr. Parnell—when he saw the leaders of the Opposition denouncing officers of the law—whether they were Ministers, judges, or police-constables, it did not signify, but all those who were engaged in keeping the peace in Ireland—ay, and in England also—he felt, with Mr. Goschen, that it was not only life and property in Ireland which were at stake—it was also security of life and property in England that the Unionists had to defend, and the character of English statesmen, and the very existence of that Constitution which, in its admirable combination of liberty and order, had been the marvel of modern times.

#### *England's Duty to Ireland*

He protested against this ignoble surrender of Ireland to Mr. Parnell, mainly because, instead of doing justice to Ireland, it would be the most cruel injustice, and the very worst wrong that could possibly be inflicted upon her. But he protested against it also because it would deal a deadly blow at the heart of Great Britain, and would lower England from the position she had won for herself among the nations. During this year of Jubilee, London had been crowded with visitors from the Continent and from our own Colonies, every one of which was proud of the mother-country, and of which every Englishman might well be proud. He liked to know and to realise that, travel where he might—in Asia, in Africa, in America, in Australia, or in the isles of the Pacific Ocean—he could not travel far without seeing the Union Jack floating over some peaceful and prosperous settlement of his country-

men, with English faces, English manners, English ideas, English religion, and English law, talking of England as their home, cherishing equally the English sentiments of loyalty and of liberty, and speaking that noble but familiar language which is the glorious birthright of the English race. But all this would be in vain; this great inheritance purchased by the virtue and the courage of our forefathers would soon crumble away, if we should begin dismembering and breaking up the United Kingdom itself—if we should resign, and that out of mere cowardice, that duty which, of all others, lay nearest home—the duty of pacifying and regenerating Ireland under the authority of the Imperial Crown. No; it must not be. This Irish Question is above party, greater than caucus-politics, higher than popularity-hunting expediency. Let all resolve to meet it in this spirit—to repel attacks on the Union as they would repel the attacks of a foreign enemy; and may God defend the right!

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SPEECH IN PROPOSING 'THE LIBERAL UNIONIST CAUSE' AT A DINNER OF THE OXFORDSHIRE LIBERAL UNIONIST ASSOCIATION ON JANUARY 25, 1888<sup>1</sup>

THE WARDEN OF MERTON next rose to propose the toast of the evening, and in doing so said he knew that he might rely on their kind indulgence—for he was speaking among friends—when he proposed to them the toast of the evening—'The Liberal Unionist Cause'—and coupled with it the name of their guest, Mr. Finlay, who had rendered such great services to it. After the able speeches to which they had listened, he felt that it would ill-become him, nor would it suit the occasion, to dwell even for a moment on the merits or the history of the Irish Question. It was enough for them to remember that by Mr. Gladstone's ignoble surrender to Mr. Parnell the great Liberal camp was suddenly broken up. Those whose

<sup>1</sup> From the *Oxford Chronicle*.



guiding-principle was party-spirit and a personal allegiance followed Mr. Gladstone. Those who could not abandon their convictions at his bidding ranged themselves under Lord Hartington. Mr. Gladstone succeeded in carrying off most of the regimental colours, which were now flaunting bravely in the wind, and most of the regimental bands, including all the largest and noisiest drums, which were still beating lustily. But the steadiest officers, both commissioned and non-commissioned, stood firm, and were now among the staunchest supporters of the Liberal Unionist cause. If they were right, then, in adopting this position, assuredly they were more right than ever now in maintaining it, for Mr. Gladstone's party had drifted further and further away from the ancient Liberal moorings. It was no longer only the Home Rule Party; it was also the party of Separation in all its forms. Foiled in his first attempt to repeal the Union with Ireland, Mr. Gladstone had shamelessly appealed to Separatist passions in Scotland and Wales; and not only so, but had deliberately striven to poison the springs of public life by stirring up the enmity of the 'masses' against the 'classes.' He had heard that, during the crisis of the Free Church Secession in Scotland, one of the seceding ministers publicly offered up a prayer in the following words: 'O Lord, pour out upon us more abundantly the spirit of disruption.' That prayer was quite worthy of Mr. Gladstone, who seemed to have adopted it. But it was their business to see, if they could, that it was not fulfilled. Even this was not all. By a kind of fatal necessity, Mr. Gladstone and Sir William Harcourt, inspired by Mr. Parnell, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Labouchere, and the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' had been driven into something like an open alliance with the forces of disorder and of anarchy, of lawlessness and of crime. It was no longer a political question only which divided them from Unionists—it was also a moral question. Not that they were Pharisaical enough to assume that all the wisdom and goodness was on their side, but that, by the profound immorality of the Gladstonian tactics, they were literally compelled to come forward as the guardians of

public virtue. It would not be right that they should speak among themselves of the Liberal Unionist cause, as he believed that history would speak of it. But he could not forbear to avow his belief that the independent and patriotic attitude taken up by Lord Hartington and the Liberal Unionist party, both in and out of Parliament, was by far the most honourable and hopeful feature of English politics within his lifetime. In separating themselves from the majority of Liberals, and in supporting the only possible Unionist Government, they had acted gravely, calmly, and, he might add, sorrowfully; for many of them had made sacrifices which he should be the last to magnify, but which it was right to recognise—sacrifices of political ambition, of social ties, of long-cherished ideals, yes, and sacrifices of one other kind, of which he was hardly able to speak in public—the heart-breaking sacrifice of personal friendship. On the other hand, they had been inevitably led to form, not a coalition, but an alliance, with their former political opponents, the Conservatives. In speaking of this alliance, which he fully approved, let him venture to express his strong conviction that for the present, and for as long as they could foresee, they should retain and cherish the name of Liberal Unionist. By all means let them be Unionists—that is, patriots first, and Liberals afterwards—but for all that let them not cease to call themselves Liberals.

*Hoc Ithacus velit et magno mercentur Atridæ.*

Let them co-operate loyally with the Conservatives by all means in support of a truly national policy, but let them fight under their own flag, because they could thus render the best service to the Unionist cause. They could not quite forget the very questionable relations of the Conservative Party with the Parnellites in 1885, nor could they quite ignore such suspicious symptoms as the Fair Trade resolution carried by a large majority at the Conservative Conference held in this very city last year. Let them remember, too, the advantage of having a name associated with all the beneficial reforms of

the last sixty years, and let them consider how much stronger their position would be in the future—let them hope a near future—when this tyranny should be overpast, if they had not renounced a name of which all of them were proud, and if they could then stand before the world as the rightful heirs and representatives of the great historical Liberal Party. With regard to the cause in this county, he might say that hitherto they had done little beyond the signature and presentation of a joint memorial to Lord Hartington from the Liberal Unionists of Oxford and Cambridge. That memorial attracted much attention in the country, and he had reason to know that Lord Hartington felt it a great encouragement and support to himself. The question was, whether they could now take any practical action in the University or the county with advantage to their cause; for he need hardly say that organisation was vain, except so far as it led to action. He had given a great deal of thought to this question, and in his opinion their main object should be to educate voters, either by the circulation of Unionist Literature or by the delivery of Unionist addresses. The latter plan involved great difficulties, which, however, might perhaps be overcome by energy. The former was quite practicable, and he thought they should lose no time in invoking the assistance of the Liberal Unionist Association in Great George Street towards carrying it out without delay. In the meantime, let every one of them seriously realise how practically the destiny and character of the country were committed to their keeping. They occupied the key of the position. They held the pass, and their simple duty was to go on holding it until they were fairly beaten or the enemy retired in confusion. When that happened—when the Separatist Party in this country was numbered with the Secessionist Party in the United States, let them abandon the title of Unionists—then, and not before. For the present, their duty was perfectly clear—to rescue the United Kingdom, and not only the United Kingdom, but the British Empire, from the imminent risk of disintegration; to defend the supremacy of the law against men who usurped

and outraged the great name of Liberty; to raise the level of British statesmanship once more above Opportunism, above time-serving, above popularity-hunting. This was the mission of the Liberal Unionist Party, this was the Liberal Unionist Cause to which he now invited them to drink; and it was a cause as sacred as ever inspired devotion in the political heroes and martyrs of the olden time.

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‘IRELAND A NATION’

*A Letter to the Editor of the SPECTATOR, April 14, 1888*

SIR,—Among the many groundless assumptions which constitute the historical argument for Home Rule, there is none so entirely delusive as the idea that Ireland was once a nation, and was robbed of its national independence by its English conquerors. I observe that Mr. Dillon, who proposed the toast of ‘Ireland a Nation’ on St. Patrick’s Day, showed a commendable prudence by appealing to aspirations rather than to facts, and dwelling mainly, not on historical traditions, but on the ‘spirit of nationality’ inherent in the Irish race. Others, however, are not so cautious; nor is it only Home Rulers who, idealising this past that was never present, think and speak of Ireland as a disinherited nation. The idea lingers in the minds, and perhaps affects the consciences, of not a few loyal Unionists, who are fain to console themselves with the plea that no such national title can avail against a continuous prescription of seven centuries. This plea is surely valid, if the original title be admitted. The Irish Question of to-day is not historical, but practical; and even if England had been guilty of crushing out the national life of Ireland in the Middle Ages, it would be the worst possible atonement to force upon Ireland a Home Rule which must needs prove ruinous now to Irish prosperity. But, happily, England was never guilty of this wrong, and those who indulge in historical dreams of ‘Ireland a Nation’ would do

well to reflect on the emphatic testimony of Mr. Prendergast, the eminent historian of 'The Cromwellian Settlement.' Mr. Prendergast's Nationalist sympathies are avowed, but his learning and research are of a kind extremely rare among patriotic writers, and his authority will hardly be disputed by Home Rulers versed in Irish history.

After justly ridiculing the exaggerated descriptions of 'the Irish enemy' by English settlers, he proceeds as follows:—

'Now, "the Irish enemy" was no nation in the modern sense of the word, but a race divided into many nations or tribes, separately defending their lands from the English barons in their immediate neighbourhood. There had been no ancient Government displaced, no national Dynasty overthrown: the Irish had no national flag, nor any capital city as the metropolis of their common country, nor any common administration of law; nor did they ever give a national opposition to the English. All the notions of nationality and independent empire are of a surprisingly modern date. The English, coming in the name of the Pope, with the aid of the clergy, and with a superior national organisation, which the Irish easily recognised, were accepted by the Irish. Neither King Henry II. nor King John ever fought a battle in Ireland.'

It may be added, that no foreign nation ever received an embassy from Ireland, and that, Catholic as it was, it was only known at Rome as a detached fragment of Christendom, to be handed over at will to an English sovereign.

It is the entire absence of any historical basis for Irish nationality which distinguishes the case of Ireland from that of Hungary or Norway, and still more from that of Scotland. The present Constitutions of Hungary and Norway are survivals or revivals of those which they possessed in past ages as independent nations. The sturdy nationality which Scotland was content to merge in the Imperial unity of Great Britain had rallied its clans under a separate monarchy, and held at bay the power of England during centuries of border-warfare. 'Scotland a Nation' is a sentiment which awakens glorious memories: but 'Ireland a Nation' is simply an un-

meaning phrase. The consolidation of the Irish provinces and regions under one settled Government has been exclusively the work of English monarchs and statesmen. The civil and political liberties which Ireland now enjoys have been conferred upon it by England, and by England alone. As I have pointed out elsewhere—

‘Neither trial by jury, nor Parliamentary representation, nor the freedom of the Press, nor the Poor Law, nor popular education, nor any privilege of citizenship now common to Irishmen with Englishmen, is an institution of Irish origin. They were all imported from England, and there is not one of them which is not grossly abused, at this very moment, by Irishmen who seem to consider an incapacity for the honest exercise of civil rights a title and qualification for the duties of national self-government.’

As for ‘the spirit of nationality,’ it is enough to say that, in Mr. Dillon’s sense, it is not shared by the Protestants of Ulster—or, indeed, of the other three Irish provinces—while it is shared by the mass of Irish Catholics in the United States. If, then, ‘Ireland a Nation’ should ever be reconstructed on this basis, it would include the very worst part of the American population on the other side of the Atlantic, and would exclude the very best part of the Irish population inhabiting the one province of which Ireland has no reason to be ashamed.

I am, Sir, &c.

GEORGE C. BRODRICK.

Athenæum Club, April 9.

## THE TREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

*A Letter to the Editor of the TIMES, Sept. 28, 1888*

SIR,—The treatment of prisoners sentenced for seditious offences has lately attracted much attention, and I observe that Mr. Dillon, in the first speech delivered by him since his release, renewed his protest against prisoners like himself

being subjected to the same penal discipline as ordinary criminals. He admits, indeed, that he 'fell into the care of prison officials who knew how to discharge their duty with humanity and honour.' But he contrasts their clemency with the instructions which he supposes them to have received from 'Dublin Castle,' and loudly denounces Mr. Balfour as the author of a system under which he was 'treated like the commonest pickpocket or the lowest of humanity.'

It has often been asserted, and never, I believe, denied, that the system under which Mr. Dillon and his associates have been treated as criminals is precisely the same as that enforced by authority of Lord Spencer and Sir George Trevelyan while the Crimes Act of 1882 was in operation. But it has not yet been noticed that it is, also, precisely the same as that enforced by authority of Mr. Gladstone as Premier, and Lord Aberdare as Home Secretary, in 1869 and 1870. Then, as now, a considerable number of Irish Nationalists were in prison for seditious offences—graver in character, no doubt, since nearly all had been convicted of treason-felony, but, for that very reason, more essentially political in their nature. Then, as now, the grossest charges of maltreatment had been persistently reiterated both in and out of Parliament, until Mr. Gladstone and the Home Office thought fit to appoint a Commission of Inquiry. Of this Commission Lord Devon was chairman, and I myself was a member.

The form of the Commission was in itself a conclusive proof of the view taken by the Government of that day with respect to the proper treatment of political prisoners. We were instructed to inquire—not whether the governors and other officials of English convict prisons had been guilty of confounding the Fenian prisoners with ordinary convicts, but, on the contrary, 'whether the treason-felony prisoners have been subjected to any exceptional treatment in any way, or have suffered any hardships beyond those incident to the condition of a prisoner sentenced to penal servitude.' In other words, it was assumed that a political convict, as, such, had no claim to exceptional privileges or indulgence, the only

question being whether, as alleged, the Fenians, as such, had been singled out in English convict prisons for exceptional severities and indignities.

It is needless to state that all these allegations, though published quite as confidently and recklessly as those against Mr. Balfour, utterly broke down on examination. We reported unanimously that, 'after a patient and minute investigation, we do not find any ground for the belief that the treason-felony prisoners in English prisons have, as a class, been subjected to any exceptionally severe treatment, or have suffered any hardships beyond those incidental to the condition of a prisoner sentenced to penal servitude.' It appeared that, in individual cases, governors or directors of convict prisons had sanctioned certain mitigations of prison discipline in their favour, where health or special circumstances might afford grounds for such leniency. These mitigations were of exactly the same character as those which have been sanctioned by the Irish prison authorities, under the iron despotism of Mr. Balfour, in favour of Mr. Dillon and others; but the reasons for them were far more cogent. It must always be remembered, and is fully recognised in the Government regulations, that prisoners confined for years cannot endure, without risk of permanent injury to health, a system of treatment so rigorous and inflexible as that which is habitually undergone by prisoners confined only for weeks or months. The considerate discretion of governors, by which Mr. Dillon seems to have benefited, is equally consistent with the established rules of prison discipline under which, as he tells us, he was compelled to wear 'the ordinary felon's dress.' For instance, a group of juvenile convicts might be set to work together, apart from their elder fellows; while the same course might be adopted in the case of specially dangerous prisoners, likely to conspire with friends outside or disloyal warders, and, therefore, requiring selected officers to watch them. One privilege conceded to the Fenian convicts may serve as a specimen of the spirit in which prison rules are, and ought



to be, administered. Every well-conducted prisoner under sentence of penal servitude is entitled to occasional visits from relations; but as the Fenian convicts, being Irish, were less accessible to relations in English convict prisons, they were allowed greater latitude in letter-writing than would otherwise have been permitted. This concession was surely reasonable, but it did not extend to correspondence with seditious newspapers, the prohibition of which is not the least of prison grievances in Ireland.

The broad fact remains, that under Mr. Gladstone's Administration the Fenian prisoners were classed with criminals, and treated as ordinary convicts. Like Mr. Dillon, they were rather favourites with the prison authorities; but they wore the ordinary convict dress, they had to put up with the ordinary convict diet (unless under medical orders), and they were compelled to clean out their own cells, as well as to perform the other menial offices incidental to convict life. This had gone on for several years under three Governments, two of them Liberal, and I am not aware that Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bruce, any more than their Conservative predecessors, ever doubted its justice or propriety, though it was furiously reprobated by the prisoners themselves, and those who sympathised with their crimes. Nor can it be said, even by advocates who do not blush to adopt such a plea, that the Fenians were men of low birth; whereas Mr. Balfour's victims are gentlemen of education and position. A list appended to our report shows that above one-third of the Fenian convicts belonged to what may be called the professional class, while only five out of twenty-six are entered as imperfectly educated. None of them, however, it is true, were members of Parliament, for members of Parliament had not then learned to receive instructions and draw salaries from the foreign enemies of this country.

It may, perhaps, be well to add that several of the Fenian convicts evinced a familiar acquaintance with Mr. Gladstone's famous letters on Neapolitan prisons, and criticised his treat-

ment of themselves with no less warmth, but with more relevance, than Mr. Gladstone has exhibited in his attacks on Mr. Balfour.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

GEORGE C. BRODRICK.

Merton College, Oxford, Sept. 28.

## UNIONISM THE BASIS OF A NATIONAL PARTY

*An Address delivered at the first meeting of the Oxford University  
Unionist League, on Dec. 1, 1888*

GENTLEMEN,—We are met this evening to found a League which, I hope, may embrace Unionists of both parties, and of all ages, in this University; and I have been requested to deliver a short address in explanation of the objects which its promoters have in view, and of the spirit in which this enterprise has been undertaken.

And, first, I would point out that our main object is *defensive*. That is more than our opponents can say. Their policy and tactics are essentially *aggressive*; and this, strange to say, gives them a great advantage, especially in appealing to young Oxford minds. Some of you may remember the old Parliamentary squib in which the Radical reformers are described as framing a motion ‘to abolish the sun and the moon’; and if such a measure were proposed by Mr. Gladstone, I do believe that it would be easier to get up an association in Oxford to support the abolition of those ancient institutions, than it would be to rouse enthusiasm in favour of maintaining them. And so, we have not only a Home Rule League, which Undergraduates of advanced views have been earnestly pressed to join; but also, as I understand, an Oxford branch of the National League, with a Nonconformist minister for its president, which has not yet taken any very active part in organising outrage, so far as I know, but which may yet succeed in attracting the attention of the Parnell Inquiry Commission. We have also already had visits from Mr. H. George, Mr. Hyndman, Mr. Davitt, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. Healy; and my

impression is, that if the Whitechapel murderer could be identified, he would be invited to lecture by an Oxford Club which I could name, if I thought proper.

Well, now, I will tell you frankly that I have long hesitated to do anything which might seem like encouraging political agitation among the younger members of the University. This University, as a place of education and learning, is not a suitable arena for politics; and, if it were, it would not be well for many of its younger members to mix themselves up with political controversy, and so to commit themselves prematurely to a line which they might afterwards see reason to abandon. When I was an Undergraduate myself, I would not declare myself a member of either party; and though I have since fought three pitched battles as a Liberal candidate, I sometimes almost wish it were now possible to resume the same attitude of self-complacent neutrality. But, after all, self-complacent neutrality is not the highest or the noblest attitude for a patriotic citizen to adopt in a great national crisis. At such a time it is the supreme duty of loyal and true-hearted Englishmen, whatever their age, and whether they be Liberals or Conservatives, to stand together shoulder to shoulder, and to forget their old differences—which are vanishing every day—in presence of a common enemy and of an overwhelming danger. It is this deep conviction which makes me, Liberal as I am, an Unionist first and a Liberal afterwards; it is this conviction which has impelled and compelled me to overcome any scruples which I may have felt about meddling with undergraduate politics, and to invite all, whether Graduates or Undergraduates, who value either the unity of the Empire or the first principles of political morality, to rally themselves, without distinction of party, under the Unionist flag. It is not we that have practised the arts of political seduction; it is not we, but our opponents, who have compassed sea and land to enlist recruits, who scarcely knew their right hands from their left, in the service of the National League—a body which is now on its trial for crimes which shock humanity. Perhaps it did not

strike our opponents that proselytism was a game which two could play. Still, it was not until I understood that a spontaneous disposition existed among Undergraduates to organise themselves against this unscrupulous propagandism, that I decided to cross the Rubicon, and join heartily with them in forming an Unionist League. I, for one, am not prepared to stand by with folded arms while young and generous minds are being entrapped by appeals to their sympathies, or perhaps to their self-importance—perhaps even to their love of ‘a lark’—into complicity with that infamous conspiracy which has gone far to demoralise, not Irish peasants only, but English statesmen. The Irish Question has ceased to be a question of mere party politics—it has ceased to be a merely political question, and has become mainly a moral question. The Liberals, headed by Mr. Gladstone, have entered into an open alliance with men who receive their instructions and draw their pay from the foreign enemies of Great Britain, who have declared war against civil government itself, and who defy the supremacy of the law. We Unionist Liberals might almost say of them, in the language of Scripture, ‘Our princes are rebellious, and have become the companions of thieves.’ There is but one answer to such an alliance. It is the formation of a counter-alliance—that is, of a National Party—and I know no reason why the formation of such a party, embracing Conservatives and Liberal Unionists, should not begin at Oxford.

I have spoken of ignorance as a powerful influence on the side of the Home Rulers, and it is my firm belief that what are called Home Rule opinions are very largely grounded upon ignorance—gross ignorance of Irish history and Irish character. Considering how long this question has been before the public, and how much has been said and written upon it, it is to me amazing that nine out of ten Home Rulers do not know the very alphabet of the subject. They do not know, for instance, that no Irish nation ever existed; that Ireland was a mere ‘geographical expression,’ comprising a group of hostile and barbarous tribes, when Henry II. con-

quered it—not that he ever did really conquer it; that it never had one king or one central government; that whatever national unity Ireland now seems to possess has been impressed upon it by England; and that if Irish nationality were now established, it would be a new creation, of purely English manufacture. They do not know that for three centuries, at least, after the so-called English conquest, the whole of Ireland, except a very few counties, practically enjoyed the blessings of Home Rule, and, as a natural consequence, relapsed into barbarism. They do not know that every civil and political liberty which Ireland enjoys—and abuses—it owes to England, and to England alone. They do not know that Grattan's Parliament, which Mr. Gladstone idealises and idolises, was exclusively composed of Protestants, and mostly composed of placemen, and that, if corruption was employed to abolish it, corruption had always been the life and soul of its existence. They do not know—or, at least, they do not realise—that Ireland is no more governed by England now than Scotland, or Lancashire, or London, but that all the United Kingdom is governed by one Imperial Parliament, in which Ireland happens to be somewhat over-represented. They do not know that Home Rule, as distinct from agrarian spoliation, has no real hold on the popular mind in Ireland, and that it is accepted, even by the Nationalist leaders, only as a step to complete Separation. They do not know that, if 'Coercion' has failed in Ireland, so has Conciliation, and that every remedial measure has been followed by a fresh outbreak of revolutionary violence. They do not know that Irish tenants, instead of being a downtrodden and defenceless class, are now more carefully protected by the law than any tenants in the civilised world, and enjoy privileges which are shared by no tenants on the Continent of Europe or in the United States of America. When such elementary facts as these are unknown to many educated people who talk glibly of Home Rule, it is no wonder that gross and barefaced misrepresentations find ready credence, and that young converts are easily made by designing politicians who practise on their ignorance.

But the Home Rule policy is not only grounded on ignorance; it is also founded on despair. No one can impute ignorance of Ireland to Lord Spencer, whom I know intimately and respect highly; and I observe that Lord Granville and Lord Kimberley, by their own showing, were converted to Home Rule by Lord Spencer. No; Lord Spencer's adoption of Home Rule does not proceed from ignorance; but I believe in my conscience that it proceeds from despair. It is not that he deceives himself by imagining that Ireland would prosper under Home Rule—he is too well informed for that—or that he places the slightest confidence in those Nationalist leaders whom he feels officially bound to whitewash. It is that he despairs of governing Ireland wisely, firmly, justly, and consistently, under the Union, so long as time-serving and popularity-hunting cripple the hands of Prime Ministers and Lords-Lieutenant; and that he is ready to risk a leap in the dark, rather than continue the experiment under such conditions. Perhaps, if he had foreseen that a new spirit would be roused among his countrymen superior to popularity-hunting and time-serving, and that a body of men called Liberal Unionists would actually prefer being in power to being in office, he would have come to a different conclusion, and would not have staked his own high character on so desperate a venture, in company with such unworthy associates. At all events, those of us Liberal Unionists who do not share his despair—those of us who believe that Home Rule is *not* inevitable, if only we have the wisdom and the courage of our fathers—yes, and of Lord Spencer himself in his better days—I say, we can never again trust leaders who lose heart suddenly in the midst of a battle, and make ignoble terms with the enemy. I fear it is too late for reconciliation now, and our feeling must be that expressed so pathetically in a poem familiar to many of us:—

Life's night draws on; let them never come back to us;  
 There would be doubt, hesitation, and pain,  
 Forced praise on our part, the glimmer of twilight;  
 Never glad, confident morning again.

But I must not be led into dwelling further on this sad aspect of the Irish Question. Let me now say a few words on the character of our own Unionist League, and on the proceedings of this evening. The name 'League' was not chosen at haphazard; it was deliberately adopted, in order to show that we never for a moment intended to found a new Club, of the same nature as the Palmerston or the Russell, the Canning or the Chatham. There are quite enough clubs in Oxford already, and there are those who think that, what with clubs, and what with musical and other societies, the demands upon the quiet hours of the evening are already too excessive. The rules to be submitted to you are, therefore, extremely simple, and impose the lightest possible tax on your time and on your money. They provide for only one general meeting in the year, though it will be in the discretion of the Executive Committee to call other occasional meetings if, for instance, they can induce some eminent speaker from London or from Ireland to come down and address us; and I am not without hope that we may do so in the course of next Term. The pecuniary liability of membership is reduced to a shilling entrance-fee, and as our Treasurer will deal only with these small coins, or stamps, there is the less fear of his absconding with the balance. But I hope that men who have once joined the League will feel that a real bond of union exists between us, which may be called into active operation at any moment—in the event, for instance, of a general election. And, as no one can say how soon occasion for action may arise, the last clause in our rules provides that any member of the League who may be willing to aid the Unionist cause, if required, by speaking or otherwise, should communicate with the General Secretary.

These rules, I may tell you, have been prepared and well considered by a Provisional Committee, and I hope will meet with general acceptance. But I will put them one by one, and it will of course be open to any member to suggest any improvement; only, as our time is short, we shall probably all feel that it would not be well to exercise this right too freely.

When the rules have been passed, we shall proceed to elect a President, a few Vice-Presidents, a General Secretary, and an Executive Committee. I believe members of the Provisional Committee will be prepared to propose names for these offices ; and I may say, with reference to the Vice-Presidents and Executive Committee, that it has been the wish of the Provisional Committee to have a judicious mixture of Conservatives and Liberal Unionists.

And this brings us round once more to the point from which we started—I mean the fusion of Conservative and Liberal Unionists in one Unionist Association. I believe that ours is one of the first examples of such an association, and is therefore likely to become memorable. No doubt, Conservatives and Liberal Unionists worked together in many constituencies at the last election, but they worked together as separate contingents of the same army, and they never adopted the common name of ‘Unionist’ ; indeed, I know that many people in this University still fancy that an Unionist must be a Liberal Unionist. Depend upon it, we shall all of us have to encounter some ridicule from our Home Rule friends before we have done with it ; some of you will be taunted with turning Liberals, while I shall be taunted with turning Tory. Gentlemen, I can assure you that I shall not be careful to answer such taunts, and I hope you will be equally indifferent to them. To borrow an expression from Mr. Parnell, I should not have cared to take off my coat unless I had regarded the formation of an Unionist League in the University as an event of serious importance, and I expect that it will be a long time before I am able to put it on again.

For do not for a moment imagine that Home Rule is dead because Mr. Gladstone’s Bill is rejected on all sides, or that the revolutionary spirit which Mr. Gladstone has roused will perish with its author. In the first place, Mr. Gladstone’s Home Rule Bill is *not* dead. It is like the Irishman knocked down in a drunken row whose friend called to him : ‘Are ye dead, Pat ? if ye are, *spake*’ ; and who replied : ‘No, I’m not dead, Mick, I’m only *spacheless*.’ I have never been able to



agree with those who say that they do not object to Home Rule in itself, but only to Mr. Gladstone's scheme of Home Rule. On the contrary, I consider that Mr. Gladstone's was about as good a Home Rule Bill as could be devised, and, if it was open to numerous fatal objections, that was because Home Rule is a disastrous and impracticable policy. But the Gladstonian policy is now developed so as to include principles borrowed from the French Jacobins, and it is forced on by methods borrowed from the Plan of Campaign. Mr. Gladstone may die, but the evil spirits which he has called up will not die with him, for, as the Scotch proverb says, 'It's hard to kill the de'il'; and, while they survive, honest and patriotic men must league themselves to resist them. This coalition or alliance—call it what you will—between moderate Conservatives and Liberal Unionists has already made itself profoundly felt in the councils of both, and, so far as human foresight goes, it promises to be lasting—at least, for the rest of my lifetime. If our own Unionist League shall have contributed in some degree to promote this beneficent end—if it shall encourage young men, entering on political life, to rise once more above the shifts of mere-party interests and temporary expediency, to a pure and far-sighted patriotism—if it shall lead the Conservatives of the future to recognise the necessity of adopting Liberal measures, and the Liberals of the future to realise that such measures should be framed in a Conservative spirit—then, indeed, the aims of its founders will have been amply fulfilled, and the meeting of this evening will not have been held in vain.

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SPEECH FROM THE CHAIR AT THE LIBERAL UNION  
CLUB, MAY 8, 1889

THE CHAIRMAN, in proposing the toast of the evening—'The Health of Our Guest' (the Earl of Derby)—said that it would ill become him to enlarge upon any of the ephemeral or sensational incidents of the Irish Question, which occupied such an

exorbitant space both in the newspapers and in the popular mind. He did not hold with those who imagined that the arguments in favour of the Union were exhausted ; they were not exhausted, because they were simply inexhaustible. Their guest, Lord Derby, never spoke without throwing some fresh light upon the subject, and he was quite sure that, if he were consulted, he could supply the texts for many powerful speeches to be delivered by members of the Union Club on subjects which had hitherto been almost overlooked. He would only mention one of those neglected subjects. 'The Case of England against Home Rule' had been most ably stated by their friend, Professor Dicey, and he had waited for a long time to see the case of Ireland against Home Rule stated, as it might be, with equal force and potency. For if Home Rule would not be a blessing to Ireland, or if, on the contrary, it would be the most ruinous curse, surely it was vain, and worse than vain, to be considering how that curse could be permanently imposed upon Ireland by Act of Parliament. He would very much like to hear the opinion of Mr. Parnell himself on that particular question, because, as far as he was aware, Mr. Parnell had never attempted to forecast or to foretell the consequence of that Home Rule which he demanded. Instead of that he preferred to dwell, and had dwelt especially in recent speeches, on the disastrous failure of past experiments in conciliation—a failure which he professed to deplore, but which, strange to say, he twisted into arguments in favour of making another experiment, which was called Home Rule. That seemed to him a very strange method of reasoning ; for, after all, who was mainly responsible for those past failures of remedial measures passed by successive Governments for the benefit of Ireland ? Really, when those who had devoted their whole influence to vilifying such a remedial policy, marring, if they could, its healing effects, and putting poison into the minds of the Irish people, turned round and conjured that very Legislature to aid them in cementing what they called the union of hearts by a fresh experiment in conciliation, he was forcibly reminded of that model Irishman in the

well-known story who, having murdered both his father and his mother, went about begging for alms in the character of a poor orphan. He would give full credit to Mr. Parnell for sincerity in his present mood, when he advocated a moderate measure of Home Rule, which could not be possibly converted into national independence. He would go further, and assume that Mr. Parnell was really prepared to support a moderate land settlement, and to re-establish the authority of the Ten Commandments in Ireland, and aid Mr. Balfour in restoring the supremacy of the law. What then? Was Mr. Parnell competent to perform any of those pledges? Was he as powerful for good as he had, unhappily, been powerful for evil? Had he ever persuaded the National League to pass a resolution adopting Home Rule and repudiating Separation, and to allay the wild spirit of rebellion and agrarian plunder which had been raised in support of the Home Rule movement, and to which it owed any vitality which it might possess? Could he control his American allies, who had supplied the sinews of war to the National League, whose ideal was an Irish republic—the harp without the crown—and who relied upon him to sever the last link which bound Ireland to Great Britain? Could he control his Irish followers, who eagerly swallowed his ‘No-rent’ manifesto, who had organised the Plan of Campaign in spite of him, and who cared nothing for Home Rule, except so far as it meant wholesale spoliation? If not, was it not more than a mockery to amuse ourselves with patent schemes of statutory Home Rule, which must inevitably be converted, by a shorter or a longer process, not only into Separation, but into anarchy?

And this brought him by a natural transition to his last and most agreeable topic—the health of Lord Derby—because no man had seen more clearly through all these illusions than Lord Derby had, or had done more to place the national aspects of the Irish question before the public in their true light, and in their true proportions. He trusted he would not shock a Liberal audience, and he was sure he would not offend Lord Derby, if he mentioned it as one of his best

claims to their confidence at a crisis like this, that, being a staunch Liberal, he was brought up in the school of Conservatism. It was not so much that all of them had something to learn from their Conservative friends; it was rather that a Liberal who has not inherited his principles, but thought them out for himself, is sure to hold them by a stronger tenure, and is not so liable to be swayed by hero-worship or traditional partisanship as those who have never gone through a process of conviction. Now, it was just this independence of judgment and character which constituted the strength of the Liberal Unionist party.

Among the leaders of that party, Lord Derby held a place second to none—unless it were to their President, Lord Hartington—that pure-minded and true-hearted man, without fear and without reproach, whose one fault was that he scarcely appreciated his own powers and influence in the country. Others might have spoken oftener than Lord Derby—none had spoken more weightily; others might have carried the war more boldly into the enemy's country—none had more tenaciously defended the centre of the Unionist position; others might have dealt as skilfully with the shifting tactics of the present—none had realised more fully, or set forth more impressively, the graver issues of the future. The Liberal Unionist party could ill have spared his great political experience, his firm grasp of the essential facts, or his masterly refutation of specious fallacies—all the more effective because embodied in the dispassionate words of truth and soberness. When the history of this memorable drama came to be written, and posterity should pass judgment upon the leading actors in it, the meed of honour would be reserved for those who had striven to lift the Irish Question above personalities, above party spirit, above opportunism, above time-serving, above popularity-hunting, to a higher level of patriotic statesmanship: and of those who should be thus rewarded, few, indeed, would be as worthy of historical gratitude as their guest, Lord Derby.

SPEECH FROM THE CHAIR, AT THE DINNER OF  
THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY UNIONIST LEAGUE, ON  
NOVEMBER 19, 1889

THE CHAIRMAN, in proposing 'The Unionist Cause,' said that, in giving them the chief toast of the evening—the Unionist Cause—he did not intend to detain them more than a few minutes, while he congratulated them on the vitality of that great Unionist Party which their opponents told them had practically ceased to exist. He confessed that such reports of their extinction, proceeding from such quarters, had no terrors for him. No doubt it would be very distressing to see one's own death gazetted in the newspapers, to have one's own funeral conducted before one's own eyes, and to read obituary notices of oneself, written in a tone anything but flattering to one's vanity. But, after all, the nerves of sensible men ought to be strong enough to resist such a trial, especially if the report were circulated by someone selfishly interested in one's disappearance from the scene. And, therefore, he would not dwell upon the palpable fact that Unionism was a living reality, and that loyal men of both parties in the State had been content to put aside their old differences for the sake of the Unionist Cause. He would rather ask them to consider what was the meaning of this Unionist Cause, which marked a new and auspicious departure in English politics. Of course, the first meaning of the Unionist Cause, and the primary duty of Unionists, was inflexible resistance to Home Rule—not only to Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule scheme, but to any Home Rule scheme which would establish an Irish Parliament in Dublin. He had often said, and he said again, that if they were to have Home Rule, Mr. Gladstone's was about as good a Home Rule Bill as the perverse ingenuity of man could devise. Whatever may be said against Mr. Gladstone, he was no bungler, and if his Bill was open to a dozen, or a hundred fatal objections, that was because Home Rule was utterly impracticable or indefensible as a policy, however attractive it might be as an

idea. They opposed Home Rule, not only because it would be ruinous to the interests of England, but also because, under the name of justice to Ireland, it would involve the worst injustice and the deadliest wrong to Ireland which Great Britain could possibly inflict upon her. Unionists knew that this Home Rule movement had no basis in Irish history or Irish character; that it was a spurious offshoot of American Fenianism, and owed its popularity among Irish peasants to unscrupulous promises of wholesale agrarian plunder; that it could not be established without civil war; that, if it were established, it would plunge Ireland into anarchy and pauperism; and that the next generation of Irishmen might well turn round and curse England, with far more reason than ever, for her cowardly surrender of Irish destinies, now under the guardianship of an Imperial Parliament. But this was not the only meaning of the Unionist Cause. Sir William Harcourt told them that Home Rule for Ireland was only the first chapter in the Separatist programme. He dared say it was, and he might rejoin that resistance to Home Rule was only the first article in the Unionist programme. They were opposed to that general policy of disintegration which Mr. Gladstone seemed to have borrowed from the age of the Heptarchy—a policy which aimed at reviving separate nationalities in Scotland, in Wales, in India; which sowed discord between classes, and which emphasised those sectional interests which must exist in every community—still more in every great Empire—but which it was the chief object of true statesmanship to unite and to consolidate. It was the proud boast of an Athenian statesman that, while he had little knowledge of music, he knew how to convert a small State into a great one. The foremost of English statesmen might well reverse this boast, for he believed he possessed a considerable knowledge of music, while, unless he were restrained by the Unionist Party, he would prove a perfect master in the art of converting a great State into a small one. There was yet another meaning of the Unionist Cause. It had come to represent a standing protest against

the popularity-hunting and time-serving which now passed for statesmanship. They had to combat, not only the conscientious sophistry of Mr. Gladstone, but the barefaced Opportunism of Mr. Labouchere and his ultra-Radical followers. The Unionist Party was nothing at all if it was not a party of principle and of conviction, and though it was their duty no less than their interest to carry popular opinion with them, they did not seek inspiration from popular opinion as from an oracle. They did not, for instance, make light of bye-elections as indicating the drift of political sentiment among the masses, but they would not accept such guidance as indicating the line of their own duty. He might go further, and contend that their opponents, by adopting the Plan of Campaign and carrying its methods into English politics, had forced them into the position of guarding and upholding the fundamental principles of public morality. He did not, indeed, claim for Unionists that they had a higher code of political ethics than Home Rulers, but he did venture to submit that their code of political ethics was in closer accordance with the Ten Commandments. They did not palliate agrarian murder; they did not admire agrarian theft; they did not instigate people to covet their neighbours' goods; and they were old-fashioned enough to hold that the maintenance of law and order was the first duty of a Government. But he was reminded by that meeting that Unionism meant even more than all this. It meant, not, perhaps, a coalition or a fusion, but a firm and loyal alliance between Moderate Liberals and Moderate Conservatives—between the Right and Left Centre, as the French would call it—which might end in the formation of a great central party. For a long time past, men of this type, sitting on both sides of the House, had regretted that party lines had separated and compelled them night after night to go into opposite lobbies, however much they might have in common, and have longed for a Government which might initiate Liberal measures in a Conservative spirit. Well, these hopes had now been more or less realised, and such a bond of union had now been formed; but

it had not been formed without great sacrifices of personal ambition and personal feeling. Perhaps the Liberal Unionists were apt to forget how great a sacrifice of pride and party-spirit was made when Lord Salisbury practically offered to serve under Lord Hartington, and when Conservatives undertook to support Liberal Unionists for seats which, a year before, had been wrested by Liberal candidates from Conservatives. Of the sacrifices made by Liberal Unionists it would hardly become him to speak. He would only say that, in his opinion, loss of office is the least of them, and that no such painful rupture of social ties had taken place since the great Civil War, when the best friends sometimes felt compelled to cross swords on the battle-field. He had great pleasure in coupling this toast with the names of Lord Jersey and Lord Wantage, both of them Conservative Unionists. Lord Jersey was known to all of them, not only as a University man, but as a neighbour, as Lord-Lieutenant of the County, and as High Steward of the City. He believed he was elected to that office by the consent of both parties, and that he was recommended to it by a singular courtesy, impartiality of mind, and independence of judgment, which he had shown both in Parliament and in county politics, and which rendered him an eminently worthy representative of the Unionist Cause. Lord Wantage was a man who had incurred the mild censure recorded against those of whom all men speak well, for when he represented Berkshire he conciliated all parties, and in his connection with the Volunteer movement he had rendered services to the nation which all his countrymen appreciated. But he could not help reminding his hearers also, that Lord Wantage was among the first to win the Victoria Cross for personal bravery on the field; and if they only stuck to their principles as he did to his regimental colours at the battle of the Alma, the Unionist Cause would never be in danger.

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SPEECH FROM THE CHAIR, INTRODUCING THE  
 RIGHT HON. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN TO A MEETING  
 OF THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY UNIONIST LEAGUE,  
 IN THE CORN EXCHANGE, OXFORD, MAY 7, 1890

MY LORDS, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN,—There is a time for all things, and assuredly the present occasion is not a time for a long speech from the Chair. We are all impatient to hear Mr. Chamberlain, and it would ill become me, nor will you expect me, to detain you by reviewing the Political Situation, by discussing the present aspect of the Drink Question, by commenting on the verdict of the Special Commission, or even by condoling with our political opponents on the painful state of discord and perplexity into which they have evidently been thrown by Mr. Balfour's Land-Purchase Bill. My duty is, happily, very simple. It is to explain the object of this meeting, to introduce this Oxford audience to Mr. Chamberlain, and to introduce Mr. Chamberlain—I believe, for the first time—to an Oxford audience. Now, this is a meeting of the Oxford University Unionist League, and, like other meetings of that League, would naturally have been limited to its own members—now more than eight hundred in number—and held in a smaller room. But having succeeded in inducing Mr. Chamberlain to address us, we knew that many outside the circle of our League would be anxious to hear him, and it was strongly represented to us—especially by the Earl of Jersey, Mr. Hall, and Mr. Maclean—that an important service might be rendered to the Unionist cause by giving Mr. Chamberlain the opportunity of speaking, not only to University men, but to citizens, and not only to Unionists, but to political waverers, and even to candid and fair-minded opponents; for though some ardent partisans can hardly imagine it, there are such beings as political waverers, and it is possible for our political opponents to be candid and fair-minded. Well, we felt that we could not resist this appeal; we enlarged our plans, we extended our invitations, and the result is the great meeting of this evening. It would

be almost impertinent for me to assure Mr. Chamberlain, who knows the Midland counties so well, that Unionism is strong in Oxfordshire. We hold two out of three county seats, we hold the seat for the City; and as for the two University seats, no Gladstonian candidate would have the smallest chance for them. But we must not be too confident. Our opponents are working day and night to beat us; like the Pharisees of old, they are compassing sea and land to make one proselyte, and when they have got hold of one—why, I leave it to others to describe what they are likely to make of him. The Home Rulers are active in the University; indeed, it was their reckless activity which called this League into existence. Far be it from me to blame them: let us rather imitate their zeal and energy, and—what is more—let us give them full credit for motives as pure and honourable as our own. We are specially bound to do so here in Oxford. I speak as a University man, with some experience of politics, to an audience largely composed of University men, and I say deliberately, that I know no constituency and no community in England where political views are more honestly formed and more conscientiously held. We stand outside the great world of politics, we are not under the dictation of local wirepullers or Parliamentary Whips, we are hampered by no electioneering pledges, we have no personal interests to serve by joining the one party or the other. Political opinion among University men, such as I see before me, may be visionary, it may be coloured by the optimism of youth, but it has the supreme merit of being founded on honest conviction. And when I claim this merit for the opinions of my Unionist friends, I claim it equally for the opinions of my Home Rule friends. We Unionists know well—and we know it to our sorrow—that some of the brightest intellects and some of the truest hearts in this University, both among seniors and among juniors, have been led to espouse the cause of Home Rule. We may, and we must, regard them as the victims of an error—of a delusion which seems to us most perilous; but I for one shall never shrink

from admitting that, if it be an error, it is a generous error on their part, and one deserving of serious refutation. And that is why I am gratified to know that some of our Home Rule friends are present here to-night, because opinions which are founded on conviction are always open to be modified by conviction, and it will do them no harm to hear the views of one who has as good a right to command their attention as any speaker that has ever appeared in this hall. I am not going to give you a political biography of Mr. Chamberlain, whose character requires no testimonial from me. I will only remind you that for the last twenty years he has been known to his countrymen, not as a Tory—though we now hear something of Tory Democrats; not as a Whig—though I hold it no shame to be a Whig—but as a Radical of the most robust type. Then why is he now a Unionist? That you will probably gather from his own speech to-night. One thing only I will venture to say for him. Mr. Chamberlain is no stranger to America—indeed, he has lately given it the greatest proof of good-will that lay in his power—and, knowing America, he sees clearly, as a true-hearted Englishman, what his colleague, John Bright, also saw—that Home Rule means for us what Secession meant for the Americans—a question of national life or death. But do not let us imagine that Mr. Chamberlain, or Lord Hartington, or any Liberal-Unionist leader, has adopted his present attitude without a great moral effort, or without great personal sacrifices. Ah! Gentlemen, it is an easy thing to float with the stream, and to sail with the wind, and to repeat the shibboleths of party, and to mistake second-hand prejudices for conscientious beliefs, and to support a popular cause amidst the plaudits of admiring comrades. But I will tell you what is hard: it is hard, it is heart-breaking, for a statesman in the prime of life to part company with political friends whom he has loved and trusted, to withdraw from them, first confidence, and then perhaps respect; to forfeit popularity for a while; to see the working classes drifting away from honest leadership under the influence of false guides; to face the prospect of lifelong

exclusion from office, even though he be consoled by the knowledge that it is one thing to be in office, and another thing to be in power. This is no light trial for political virtue, and there are those who have flinched under the ordeal. But Mr. Chamberlain was not one of them, and it is chiefly because he stands before you to-night as a consistent man, without fear and without reproach, a staunch Unionist though a staunch Radical, that I now claim for him, and promise him on your behalf, a most hearty welcome and a most respectful hearing.

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SPEECH IN PROPOSING 'LITERATURE' AT THE  
GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY'S DINNER TO MR. H. M.  
STANLEY, JULY 3, 1890

MR. PRESIDENT, MY LORDS, AND GENTLEMEN,—A toast has been entrusted to me which at first sight may appear somewhat foreign to the object of our present gathering, but which, in truth, is as closely related to it as that which has just been drunk. I give you the toast of 'Literature,' and I couple with it the names of Mr. Lecky and Professor Jebb of Cambridge. The connection between Literature and Geography is no remote or fanciful connection. Not only is Mr. Stanley himself a prolific and successful author; not only have earlier travellers, from Herodotus downwards, enriched literature with graphic descriptions of their experiences—but the resources of literature itself, in all its branches, have been vastly increased by the progress of geographical discovery. I think we hardly realise how contracted was the horizon, and therefore how narrow—I might almost say, how provincial—were the sympathies of those great writers in olden times whose masterpieces are still justly regarded as perfect models of style, proving, as they do, what the human mind is capable of constructing out of the scantiest possible materials. And let us remember that for more than 1,000 years after the fall of the Roman Empire this horizon was

<sup>1</sup> From the *Proceedings* of the Royal Geographical Society, July 3, 1890.

not sensibly widened, and no important addition was made to the geographical knowledge of mankind. To Dante and Chaucer, to Roger Bacon and Thomas Aquinas, no less than to Homer and Demosthenes, Virgil and Cicero, the earth was practically the *Orbis Veteribus Notus*, an irregular block of countries curtained in by a veil of mystery, and mostly grouped around the Mediterranean Sea. Under such limitations, that larger conception of human nature which inspires modern literature was just as impossible as that larger conception of natural science which has been set forth by the President of the Royal Society. And so, in spite of their matchless form, the poetical and other literary works of the ages before Columbus are not to be compared in range of thought, or in breadth of human sympathy, with the literary works of the last three centuries. The discovery of America was immediately followed by a marvellous literary revival, the expansion of literature has kept pace ever since with the expansion of geography, and the humblest newspaper-writer of to-day has at his command a stock of ideas, directly or indirectly derived from geography, which neither Plato, nor Aristotle, nor any other philosopher, could ever have evolved from the recesses of his own mind.

But the gentlemen whose healths I couple with this toast do not belong to the class of newspaper-writers. Having long been a member of that class myself, I should be the last to disparage the art of journalism—especially in the presence of Mr. Stanley; but I am glad that on this great occasion both ancient and modern literature are worthily represented by men of the genuine scholarlike type, who study form as well as substance, and have left a permanent mark on the subjects which they have treated. Professor Jebb is known far beyond the bounds of his own University, and even of his own country, as the learned editor of several Greek poets and orators; a scholar of scholars, yet deeply imbued with modern culture; as the leading spirit among our modern English Hellenists, and as the biographer of Bentley, one of the greatest among many great Cambridge scholars. As for

Mr. Lecky, we all know that his numerous historical works are already standard works, and that, as the phrase goes, no library is complete without them. I am sure he will forgive me when I add that, as I peruse the last of these—his excellent and monumental ‘History of the Eighteenth Century’—and as I follow him through the mazes of Parliamentary intrigue, and the dreary waste of Irish politics in the reign of George III., I feel that he must have been endowed with a patience almost equal to that of Mr. Stanley in forcing his way through that dismal forest of Central Africa.

However, we may congratulate him, like Mr. Stanley, on having come out, safe and sound, on the other side, and I know you will all agree with me that we are doing justice to Literature when we associate its interests with such names as those of Professor Jebb and Mr. Lecky.

SPEECH IN PROPOSING ‘THE BISHOP AND CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE’ AT THE OXFORD DINNER TO LORD JERSEY, OCTOBER 15, 1890

THE WARDEN OF MERTON said he felt the more diffidence in proposing the next toast—‘The Bishop and Clergy of the Diocese’—because he must appear to be trespassing on the special province of their good friend, Alderman Deazeley, who had proved himself a perfect master in the difficult art of proposing this toast appropriately. And yet, perhaps, as the son of a true-hearted and devoted clergyman, long-since dead, he might have some right to speak from experience and from conviction of the virtues of our parochial clergy. Whatever might be said against the principles of an Established Church, it had at least this merit—that it placed in every parish, however poor or remote, an educated and generally a pious man, whose duty it was to exercise a pastoral care over all who would accept his ministrations, to promote education, to visit the sick, comfort the dying, and to befriend all his parishioners who stood in need of aid,

either spiritual or temporal. All this was his duty, and most, if not all, of our clergy did their best to fulfil it; but it was their moral duty, not their legal duty—it was written in no law either of the Church or of the State, and, if it were, the bishop himself had no means of enforcing it. Well, then, he claimed for the clergy of our Church that no other class of public servants in this or any other country did so much as they did outside and beyond their official duty, and that under the influence of the highest motives that could animate human nature. Yes, as the Bishop well reminded them in his Address to the Diocesan Conference, the parish, and not the platform, was the proper sphere of the clergyman, and they must all agree with him that it would be an evil day for the Church when its clergy took to agitation and popularity-hunting, instead of attending to their parish duties. A shrewd old French ecclesiastic strongly advised the Emperor Napoleon not to summon a Grand Synod of the French Church, adding this remark: ‘The wine is an excellent one, but much better in bottle than in cask.’ He confessed that he was very much of that opinion: at all events, the parochial clergy, with few exceptions, set an example of godliness and benevolence to all their parishioners which did honour to Christianity; and if this were true of the clergy in other dioceses, it was certainly true of the clergy in the diocese, and especially in the City, of Oxford. They were well supplied with clergymen in Oxford. With a population of about 50,000, they had some fifty ministers of the Established Church, a good many of whom were men of high culture, appointed by the Colleges, and he did not know one of whom they had reason to be ashamed. They might disagree with the politics of one, or the ritual of another, but they lived amongst them, they knew their going out and their coming in, and he said deliberately, in the presence of the Archdeacon and the Rural Dean, that he did not believe a more hardworking, blameless, and exemplary body of men was to be found in the country. He was sure, if their parochial activity was to be measured by the frequency and urgency of their appeals for subscriptions to Heads of

Colleges, the Bishop had every reason to be satisfied ; but then, as they all knew, they subscribed themselves, out of their own slender incomes, on a scale which very few laymen would care to imitate. Of the Bishop himself he would only say that he seemed to combine almost all the qualities which could be desired in the chief pastor of this diocese. He must not say much in his presence of his great historical learning, which enabled him to understand, as few men could, the constitutional relations of the Church and State—the depth and the continuity of the organic connection between the life of the English Church and the life of the English nation. The historical infallibility of our Bishop was one of the few truths which were universally received, even by the critics of our Oxford Common-rooms, almost satisfying that old test of Catholicity—*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*. But our Bishop was not merely a man of books. As he said in his first Charge, he succeeded two men very difficult to follow : the one, who could make everyone do what he wanted ; the other, who made a point of doing everything himself. But perhaps his successor would have a like complaint to make against him, and feel how difficult it was to rival, not only the learning, but the prompt attention to business, the earnest sympathy in the discharge of his episcopal functions, and the natural geniality of disposition, which were the gifts of our present Bishop. These were days in which no bishop could afford to be what rowing-men call a ‘duffer’—he was sure the Bishop would pardon the expression. He knew of no ‘duffers’ on the Episcopal Bench ; everyone felt that he must pull his weight in the boat, and show practical capacity in contact with the world. No one knew this better than our Bishop. It had been suspected that he sometimes regretted his banishment to Cuddesdon, and would like to reside a little nearer his Cathedral Church and the Bodleian Library. But he was not sure that he was not safer at Cuddesdon—just far enough away to save him from being incessantly consulted and worried about trifles, yet near enough to admit of his being present with them for every purpose of real importance,



and even of his taking part in social gatherings on occasions of special interest, such as that which had brought them all there that evening.

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ADDRESS ON DISTRIBUTING THE PRIZES AT THE  
OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL, NOVEMBER 26, 1890<sup>1</sup>

BEFORE I proceed to distribute the prizes, I have been asked to say a few words on the occasion which brings us here to-day—an occasion which reminds me of old times, and which has a great interest to all of us, whether as parents, or as boys, or as masters, or as citizens of Oxford and well-wishers of the High School. I will not follow the Mayor into the past history of the School, on which he is able to speak with much fuller knowledge than I possess; but I entirely agree with him that it has amply justified the hopes of its founders. This last year has not been a specially eventful one—and no school can expect to produce Jolliffes every year—but the testimony of both the examiners, and the results obtained in the local examinations, show that solid and sound teaching continues to be characteristic of the Oxford High School. The Classical Examiner particularly notices, as evidence of such teaching, the evenness of work in each class, the accurate knowledge of Latin syntax, and the readiness of the boys under *vivâ voce* examination. Now, I am accustomed to read examiners' reports on the work done in one of our greatest public schools, and I can assure you that such praise from a competent examiner is the more valuable because it is rare. Then we have a very creditable list of honours won in the Junior Local Examinations, including the second and fourth places in the first class. And though no boy has won a college scholarship direct from the School during the past twelve months, I must say that I think Mr. Cave deserves the larger part of the credit for the success of Underhill in winning a mathematical scholarship at Balliol, after several years' training at this School, from which he migrated only a year

<sup>1</sup> From the *Oxford Chronicle*.

ago. Upon the whole, considering the numbers of the School, I think we have every reason to be satisfied with its 'public running'—if I may borrow the expression from the sporting world. I heartily wish that its numbers were larger; I believe that, if its advantages were fully understood by the parents of Oxford, they would be larger, and I look forward to a growing feeling in favour of higher day-schools like this, as compared with higher boarding-schools; but we must remember that not even the most famous of our public schools can dispense with the aid of permanent endowments, and with these we are by no means so well provided as could be wished. The Corporation, it is true, has granted three entrance-scholarships annually, open to competition among the public elementary schools of Oxford. Moreover, one exhibition, tenable in the University, is awarded annually out of private benefactions. But the free scholarships open to competition among boys already in the School are mostly derived from the temporary subscriptions of Colleges or individuals, and this is a great source of weakness. However, it has already been mentioned that our old friend, Alderman Hughes, who has done so much for the School, has founded a permanent scholarship of this kind for boys under fifteen, and I have just heard that Mrs. Green has given a further donation of 10*l.* for the library. But let us never forget that all schools, however well endowed, and, most of all, new schools, mainly depend for their reputation on the character of the masters, the parents, and the boys for the time being. Now I will say nothing by way of advice to masters, because it is obviously their interest to do their best for the School, and because, whatever their failings may be, they are, as a body, one of the most capable and hard-working classes of men to be found in the country. The elevation of the educational profession is among the most remarkable and salutary reforms that has occurred in my lifetime, and here in Oxford we are specially fortunate in obtaining the services of able teachers, including our excellent Head Master, at very moderate salaries.

But I will venture, though not a parent myself, to offer a

few remarks for the consideration of parents. The educational duties of parents do not cease with the act of sending their children to a good school—especially if it be a day-school. It is home influence which inspires the earliest efforts of boys, which sustains their flagging resolution, and which fortifies them against the manifold temptations of boyhood. If I may be allowed to speak for a moment from personal experience, it was the desire to please my parents which first disposed me to industry, long before the fire of ambition was lighted within me; and it was the remembrance of their warnings which often deterred me from following a multitude to do evil. What is the secret of efficiency in those Scotch parochial schools which set England an example of national education? Why, that Scotch parents take an active interest in the studies of their children, and instead of encouraging them to be idle at home, urge them on to do their utmost. Depend upon it, the parent is the schoolmaster's best ally, and where the discipline of the home is defective the discipline of the school will be of little avail. And now, let me address a few words to the boys of the High School—not as a Don or as an Alderman, but as one who was once an Eton boy—not so very long ago, though I have now got to a time of life when one is said to be of the same age as everybody else. I will not remind those who have won prizes that school-prizes are chiefly valuable as incentives to further efforts, especially when one is discouraged by the disappointments which come to all of us, and when the memory of past successes may help to revive in us a proper self-confidence. I will not remind those who have failed that honest work is its own best reward, and that, although people remember the fact of your having gained a prize, no one remembers the fact of your not having gained a prize. All this you know as well as I do, and I cannot undertake to assure you, as some would assure you, that ability and industry are certain to command success in after-life. I wish this were true; I wish promotion by merit were the general rule of this world: but it is not always so—the race is not always to the swift, or the battle to the strong.

Favour and influence, which never enter into school-competitions, have a good deal to do with the competitions of after-life, and it is, perhaps, easier to deserve what you get than it is to get what you deserve. But though all cannot secure great wealth or high positions, the chances of success are assuredly increased by conscientious industry, and, in the meantime, all can win by merit the respect of neighbours and friends, and that is one of the greatest blessings and treasures of human life. Let me earnestly impress upon you the importance of cultivating two virtues—the habit of energy and the sense of duty. And when I speak of duty, I mean duty to your parents, whose happiness largely depends on your conduct at school and at home, duty to your schoolfellows, and duty even to your masters, who, after all, are men of like passions with yourselves, who need kindly sympathy, and who can do far more for your benefit if they see that you appreciate it. But perhaps the highest of earthly duties is your duty to yourselves. Self-respect, in the best sense, is one of the strongest outworks of Virtue. Remember that every one of us is the guardian of his own powers, and of his own soul; that life, as well as death, is a very serious affair—quite as serious as the Bible tells us; that school is the preparation for life, and that, whether you realise it or not, you are now moulding your own characters into a form which may probably last as long as you live. And this brings me to one other subject on which I should like to say a word. It may be said, and it has been said, that examinations test nothing but cleverness, and that it is only the sharpest boys, and not the best, who are rewarded by prizes. A few days ago I was glad to read a vigorous protest against that notion from the present Bishop of London, whose educational experience enables him to speak with an authority to which I cannot pretend. The Bishop pointed out, what every teacher knows, that not only intellectual qualities, but moral qualities, such as self-control, and self-denial, and patience, and generosity, are developed by examinations, and that, for this reason, boys of weak or vicious character very seldom excel

in them. And as for the other objection to examinations—that they sometimes injure youthful constitutions—I confess that I have very little patience with it. Of course, there is a danger of overwork, and parents should guard against it; but overwork is a rare and trifling danger compared with those which spring from idleness, and I have yet to learn that the worst tempter of English youth is—not the world, or the flesh, or the devil, but an excessive desire of literary distinction, and an extreme devotion to study, which, after all, is the main duty of boys and young men during the age of education.









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